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New Masses

DECEMBER 3, 1935

Gen. Sherrill's Record

THE record of America's Olympic spokesman is presented in this issue of THE NEW MASSES. The indictment of General Charles H. Sherrill comes from his own mouth and typewriter. It is no hasty arraignment of a man who might be honestly convinced that it would be a bad thing to keep several thousand American athletes home rather than let them take part in the Nazi Olympic Games in Berlin next year. There is nothing honest about General Sherrill's position. He claims to be non-partisan in politics; the record shows him to be a fierce advocate of fascist terror, an adulator of Mussolini and Hitler. He claims to be a friend of the Jews; the record shows him spreading subtle anti-Semitic poison over many years. He claims to be a fit representative of and spokesman for the youth of America—a country still supposed to be based on a republican and democratic form of government; the record shows him to be a believer in monarchism, a man who has traveled all his life in the direction of any throne he could reach, however blood-stained, and he has traveled with dust on his knees. The record is in on General Sherrill. If enough members of the A.A.U. and the general public who want fair play in sports and who don't want fascism can be got to read and ponder the record, General Sherrill will be out.

THE PLOWMAN — *Russell T. Limbach*

Bernard S. Deutsch

RARELY does THE NEW MASSES shed a tear at the death of an old party politician. But the passing of Bernard S. Deutsch, president of New York's Board of Aldermen, recalls the fact that he was one of the few men in the city administration who showed even sparks of liberalism. While we at no time saw eye to eye with the Fusion regime, it is important to note that a certain differentiation existed in the administration. Deutsch was among those who associated himself with the anti-Nazi and anti-war movements of the city—whether out of political wisdom or because of a genuine liberalism we cannot say. At any rate, Deutsch did defend the six medical students expelled for their anti-war activity from Columbia University by that Nobel Peace Prize winner, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler. In his speech at the Henri Barbusse memorial dinner six days before his death—read to the audience in his absence—Deutsch clearly grouped himself with the forces of peace and against the Red-baiting reactionaries. Besides silencing one of the few administration voices for peace, Deutsch's death means that the legislative branch of the New York administration comes once again under absolute control of Tammany. Timothy J. Sullivan, vice-chairman of the Board, a Tammany warhorse of the old type, succeeds Deutsch, giving the Tiger a majority. La Guardia displays no eagerness to run foul of the Tiger. Harmony on essential policies—the sales tax and transit unification—will undoubtedly prevail. Fusionists and Tammanyites are anxious not to step on any Wall Street toes and the people of New York will profit nothing by the new alignments. For the working and middle-class New Yorker, the problem still remains—of building a powerful, effective Labor Party.

The Autocrats of C. R.

EVERONE who has followed the strike at Consumers' Research will agree with the investigating committee of prominent liberals, who place the blame on F. J. Schlink and J. B. Mat-

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thews for their "autocratic control." The committee does say of the union that there has been some violence but it immediately adds that violence and other provocative tactics on the part of Consumers' Research officials had "contributed to a state of mind in which acts of desperation were almost inevitable." The findings of the liberals completely dismisses Schlink's amazing charges that the union had formed alliances with Big Business and with the Communist Party. The committee shares the union's original suspicion that the dismissals of the members appeared to be motivated by other reasons than those assigned. It furthermore holds the Board of Consumers' Research responsible for not averting the strike and for not settling it now.

DIRECTORS SCHLINK and Matthews will doubtless shrug the verdict away and reiterate their intention to rule their little kingdom at a Jersey cross-roads as absolutely as they please. They have already stated in a recent letter that they wish for no subscriptions from persons who are not in agreement with their policies in toto. The committee does not believe that the directors of C. R. can see this program through. "Consumers Research . . . . will not succeed in reestablishing public confidence until it has adopted a policy of fair dealing with all its employes based upon collective bargaining in place of autocratic paternalism." The strikers, now out for twelve weeks, are carrying on buoyed by the hope that popular opinion will destroy the complacency of Messrs. Schlink and Matthews. Every progressive element in the country is behind the strikers. The committee's report may be expected to be an important factor in the struggle as it becomes more and more widely known. Signers of the report are Reinhold Niebuhr, chairman; Roger N. Baldwin, George S. Counts, Vincent P. Murphy, William L. Nunn, Herman F. Reissig, Helena N. Simmons, Norman Thomas and James Waterman Wise.

A United Front Foretaste

A FORECAST of the People's Front in this country was provided the past week at Madison Square Garden when 17,000 individuals, representing upward of sixty-five workers' organizations, responded to the call for working-class solidarity issued by the Association of Workers in Public Relief Agencies. For the first time social workers sat side by side with their "clients"—unemployed workers on relief. Present, too, in large numbers were members of A. F. of L. and independent unions and other groups. They cheered such speakers as Elmer Brown of the International Typographical Union, Frank Palmer of the People's Press and Heywood Broun, head of the Newspaper Guild. They gave Mayor La Guardia and his Emergency Relief Board some food for thought. White-collar and professional workers who a year ago would have shied away from even the suggestion of such an idea poured their hard-earned contributions into a fund to cement them in a unity with their allies in the manual trades and to the people who in a former day would have merely been their "clients." And they did this in defiance of the threat of the Emergency Relief Board that any public-relief agency worker who appeared on the platform at such a meeting or as much as mentioned to a client the problems of unemployment relief, would unceremoniously and promptly be fired. The E.R.B. has used every stratagem to break the common front of the employed and the unemployed, in preparation for a wage-cutting, relief-cutting drive of retrenchment. But the demonstration at Madison Square showed them what they are up against.

The New Asiatic "State"

WHEN Yin Ju-keng, Administrative Commissioner of the North China demilitarized zone proclaimed the "independence" of a large part of Eastern Hopei province and announced he would "work with Japan" he revealed Tokyo's latest tactics in Asia. Nippon has embarked on its program to take North China bit by bit. Japan's gingerly advances toward an "autonomous" puppet regime in North China are based on very good reasons. Hallet Abend writes from Shanghai that "The rising tide of Chinese patriotism and resentment may force Chinese leaders to denounce many Sino-Japanese agreements on the plea that they were signed under duress." Of course, diplomatic machinations in London, Washington, Nanking and Tokyo undoubtedly played a considerable part in making Japan wary, but international diplomacy alone cannot, as has been seen, deter the Japanese war lords, forced by economic stringencies into perilous adventures. With the British Asiatic fleet in the Mediterranean and with the United States playing a policy of hesitation, British and American opposition cannot be very decisive. What can be determining, however, is a nation-wide, anti-Japanese war in China and this is a serious matter for the Japanese imperialists to reckon with. The future of China depends largely upon the growth of the militant anti-imperialist front of the Chinese people and the effective assistance of anti-imperialist forces throughout the world.

NEITHER Chiang Kai-shek nor the Nanking government as such can ever become real obstacles in the way of Japan's advance in China. As late as a few days ago, during the most critical days of the North China situation while the whole nation was demanding resistance, Chiang Kai-shek advocated a program of non-resistance at the Kuomintang Congress at Nanking. It was only after Japan delayed its North China adventure that Chiang instructed the official news agency to "correct" its former version of his speech. Instead of organizing resistance Chiang engaged in negotiations with Japan and among many other proposals that he is reported to have made to Japan is the offer to permit North China "self government" and a promise at the same time to "pay full regard to relations with Japan in matters of personnel." On November 24 the Japanese agent Yin Ju Keng declared the formation of a so-called "East Hopei Anti-Communist Autonomous Council" that included 25 counties in Hopei province. On November 25 he proclaimed the "independence" of a large portion of this area.

THE only force to stop Japan is the rising tide of anti-Japanese struggle in that vast country. The widespread nature of the movement can be seen from the fact that, although the Nanking government, as such, is corrupt beyond repair, there are "strong factions at Nanking and Canton who will not tolerate any further yielding to Japan but favor a declaration of war, the invoking of sanctions by the League of Nations and a request to the United States to declare an embargo if Japanese armies invade North China." (N. Y. Times, Nov. 23.) Even junior officers in Chiang's army are reported to be demanding resistance to Japan. These sincere anti-Japanese elements are bound to be drawn into a real anti-imperialist front with the anti-Japanese

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volunteers in Manchuria and North China and the Chinese Red Armies and partisan troops throughout the country. A National Defense government may be organized as the rallying center of all anti-Japanese forces in China. Cognizant of the importance of such a government as a powerful factor in the Chinese liberation movement and realizing the world-wide consequences of the current developments in the Far East, the American Friends of the Chinese People in New York are calling a mass meeting on Thursday, December 5 at Irving Plaza to make preparations for concrete means of support. They urge all friends of the Chinese people to hold mass meetings, send telegrams of protest and otherwise help crystallize American opinion for the support of the movement to establish a liberated China.

What Price Research

MAJOR GEORGE L. BERRY takes himself and his fading N.R.A. so seriously that he has just abolished a whole study unit because he was afraid it would upset his conferences with industrial leaders on voluntary trade agreements. Strange as it may seem, this study was one on unfair trade practices, designed to find out what predatory practices had developed since the N.R.A. The liberal lawyer directing the study, Tom Holland, thought he could find out about real coercive devices now going on: racketeering, credit coercion, commercial coercion and other practices of monopolists. He actually had some investigators question small business men who had been oppressed by these means. That was too much for Berry and his industry-minded advisors. Without any warning, they swooped down on Holland and abolished his unit. Rather than turn his attention to an examination of the sterile N.R.A. files, which today constitutes the bulk of N.R.A. "research," Holland tendered his resignation. But on the day when the wholesale dismissal of N.R.A. employes took place, instead of an acceptance of his resignation (with a kind note from the President) Holland received a notice of his dismissal.

Rents and Housing

THE latest issue of the "Real Estate Analyst," a publication readily available to any worker with the subscription price of $140, has just come to our attention. In it are a number of charts and tables which would warm the heart of any landlord reader. The first of these charts, prosaically entitled, "Average Advertised Dwelling Rents, 1935" presents a succession of sharply rising staircases—golden ones for the landlords—showing month by month the rent levels in 26 cities. An accompanying table shows that the average rent per room in single family houses has increased from January to October in every one of the cities covered: in Detroit, from $5.73 to $8.80; in Milwaukee, from $4.89 to $6.40; in Omaha, from $4.69 to $6.67, with similar increases in the other cities. In apartments, rent per room has increased in New York from $17.29 to $19.29.

THE picture is rounded out by another table and chart. The table states that by October 2, the supercolossal P.W.A. had completed sufficient "low cost" housing to accommodate all of 3,059; with one-third of American families inadequately housed, according to frequent P.W.A. statements. Another chart places the residential building boom of 1935 in its proper perspective: building of new family accommodations for the past three months has been going on at the rate of five and one-third per ten thousand families, compared with a rate in 1925 of 65 per ten thousand families. To the unbounded joy of America's landlords, it seems that our chronic shortage of adequate housing is to remain with us for some time to come.

Armenia Rejoices

ARMENIANS the world over will celebrate the fourteenth anniversary of Soviet Armenia on November 29. None of the constituent republics of the Soviet Union has had a happier history than Armenia since the workers overthrew the so-called Dashnak rule and set up a socialist republic. In 1920 the head of the Dashnak government sent out an appeal in which he confessed to the whole world that "death is flying over Armenia" and that "the people are vanishing, almost 3,000 daily." Armenia had lost 36 percent of her population and war was raging with surrounding nations. The establishment of Soviet rule brought peace and ever since that time Armenia has been a land of construction and progress. In the words of Walter Duranty:

> The Soviet government has brought to Armenia something this country has not known for centuries—peace, security and a feeling of national independence. No more the slaves of the Czar or exploited by Russian business interests, the Armenians at last feel that they are masters in their own homes, with Moscow pumping new blood into their economic veins instead of drawing it away.

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The Battle of the Loans

British Capitalism's Dilemma

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON, Nov. 25.

AS I anticipated, the first question to come up after the election has proved to be the resumption of foreign lending on the part of the British capitalists. The City of London is at the moment besieged by Nazi agents desperately trying to borrow. But now a new factor has arisen, namely, the possibility of a loan to the Soviet Union.

This new factor is of the utmost importance, for mark you, the British capitalists have got to lend somewhere. Their accumulations of capital are once more piling up and piling up. Unless they can find some profitable employment for them the slump must come again. Hence if there was no alternative the Nazis would almost certainly get their loan sooner or later. Thus the appearance of the Soviet Union in this field also makes all the difference, for on the most rigidly capitalist profit-making grounds the case for lending to the Soviet Union, rather than to Germany, is overwhelmingly strong.

Think of the records of the two countries. During the whole of the 1920's British and American money poured into Germany. Much of that money has been irrevocably lost by German default. Nearly all the rest of it is what the financiers call "frozen," that is to say it is still nominally the property of the British and American banks who lent it but they cannot get it out of Germany. At the same time the Soviet Union was borrowing heavily (though not much from Britain owing to the credit boycott against her which the British banks rigidly maintained) and every single farthing of these large amounts has been scrupulously repaid. Just think what the capitalists would be saying now if the positions were reversed, if Germany had paid up her debts and if the Soviet Union had defaulted on hers. The British and American capitalists would be yelling for a punitive expedition to collect their money or failing that, for a complete economic boycott of the Soviet Union. Truly in this matter of paying your debts a fascist government can steal the horse while a workers' government cannot look over the gate.

Incidentally, it is really funny to read the articles of these British financial experts who are opposed to the proposed Russian loan solemnly reminding their readers that Russia has not settled her debts and that therefore the financial boycott must be maintained. They marvelously ignore the fact that since they last used that argument the British government has flatly repudiated its debts to the United States and is now therefore in precisely the same boat as the Soviets. But all this sort of thing is natural and inevitable and only proves that the City of London agrees with our basic contention that fascism is merely one particular form of capitalist government and is deserving therefore of every support and indulgence from the capitalists of the world.

But there is more in it than this. A great deal of the money which the British bankers lent to Germany over the last fifteen years was then actually relent by Germany to Russia on usurious rates of interest. The Russians have subsequently repaid the Germans in full but the Germans have not repaid the British. In addition, of course, the Russians spent the money on buying German machinery and goods of all sorts, so the Germans gained three times over. First, they borrowed the money cheap from Britain and then lent it dear to Russia. Second, the money was spent in Germany on German goods. And third, when the time to repay the British arrived the Germans calmly defaulted. Yet these are the people who now come most hopefully back to the British bankers for another loan.

This is why the case for lending direct to the Soviet Union this time is so strong that even certain sections of opinion in the City are compelled to favor it. Indeed if these sections are overruled and in spite of this astounding record the loan once more goes to Germany it can only mean that normal commercial interest has been overridden by purely political considerations. No capitalist in his senses would today lend his money on the quivering security which is all that Nazi Germany can offer, when he could lend it at quite as high a rate of interest on the perfect security of the Soviet Union. If, therefore, in spite of everything, the money goes to Germany it will mean that the little innermost knot of British financial capitalists associated with the great oil companies and the merchant banking houses have decided that they would rather run the acute risk of losing their money again in an effort to prop up fascism than make a handsome profit by lending to the Soviet Union. It would mean also of course that the pro-German element in the cabinet was in the ascendancy, for a loan to the Nazis, utterly unjustifiable on commercial grounds, could only be in fact a war loan, a loan designed to enable the Germans to make war. And while the British government of course supposes that that war would be against the Soviets it is quite possible that the Nazis, once they had got their loan, would switch round and attack the British empire.

Indeed it is quite obviously in the interests of 99.9 percent of the British population, of almost everyone including most of the capitalist class but excluding just the tiny knot of finance capitalists at the top, to lend to the Soviet Union instead of to Germany. The question is whose interests will prevail, the interest of the 99.9 percent or the interest of the .1 percent? The concentration of wealth and power in British capitalism has now reached such fantastic heights that this is a very open question. The .1 percent is at least as powerful as the 99.9 percent but in this case the issue is so glaring, the facts are so undeniable, that there is real hope of things going right.

(*These dispatches by John Strachey are appearing weekly in* THE NEW MASSES.)

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SPEAKING OF RECKLESS DRIVERS

William Gropper

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Who Is General Sherrill?

HENRY COOPER and WALTER WILSON

A MAN who is contemptuous of democracy, an idolator of royalty, a worshipper of Mussolini, an admirer of Hitler and all other fascist dictators, a defender of fascist terror, a rampant imperialist, a war-monger, a breeder of racial and religious hatred, a man un-American to the core—is such a man fit to represent American youth and to speak in the name of American sports? Brigadier-General Charles Hitchcock Sherrill, American representative on the International Olympic Committee and leading spokesman for the forces seeking to hold the Olympics in Nazi Germany, is all these things and more.

In his speeches and statements aimed against the take-the-Olympics-out-of-Berlin movement, the General has struck the pose of being simply an adherent of the "sport for sport's sake" ideal, one who has no interest in the internal affairs of Nazi Germany (or of any other country), a kind of political innocent who is shocked and hurt by what he calls "injecting politics" into sports. We will show in this article that the General's claim to impartiality is absolutely false, that he is an ardent partisan of all things fascist, whether in Berlin or Rome, that he heartily approves mixing politics and sports —when it is done under fascist auspices— and that he has served as an enthusiastic propagandist for fascism for many years.

Sherrill is fond of fascist dictators. He likes them all, from Horthy to Hitler. While in Germany in his capacity as a member of the International Olympic Committee, the General spent four days at the Nazi rally in Nuremberg (which, incidentally, was probably the greatest anti-Semitic gathering in all history) as the personal guest of Hitler. He was completely captivated by der Fuehrer, whom he characterized as "a man of great personal charm."[1] He was particularly struck by the "huge lumps of judgment" on the dictator's temples and by his astonishing firmness. Far more serious subjects than sports—namely, imperialism and war—were discussed by the General and Der Fuehrer during their confidential talks, as we shall learn later, and their complete unanimity on these subjects will be clearly shown.

Yes, General Sherrill loves all fascist dictators, but most of all he loves Mussolini. It is quite improbable that a more ardent admirer of Il Duce can be found outside of Italy. In his eyes, Mussolini is a "world hero" of gigantic proportions, for whom Sherrill frankly admits an "ardent hero-worship." In 1923, while on a mission to Rome to prepare for the 1924 Olympics, Sherrill met Mussolini, was immediately infatuated and thereafter became the most prolific propagandist in America for Italian fascism and its hero. In 1924, he published a book in defense of dictatorship and royalty which admittedly was inspired by Il Duce. The books carries this dedication:

> To
> Benito Mussolini
> Ardent Nationalist and world leader against the International Menace of Bolshevism.

And Bolshevism, in the General's eyes, as will be shown later, includes just about everything that runs counter to the "ideal" system set up by Mussolini and approved by Sherrill. In 1931 the General wrote another book, *Bismarck and Mussolini.* Professor Arthur Livingston of Columbia dismissed this book with understandable disgust:

> General Sherrill likes stained glass windows. He likes kings and ex-kings. Royalty lacking, he will pocket his pride and put up with a president like Masaryk or a prime minister like Benes. However, he really dotes on dictators. He will go to considerable trouble to see the spot where a dictator was born. He will also go to a lot of trouble to devise a parallel between one dictator and another, and between them all and himself. What they all have in common with General Sherrill is a love of Kings.[2]

In the introduction to this book, the General tells us how he came to write it:

> It came about quite naturally. All my life I have been a great admirer of Bismarck. During the International Olympic Sports Committee's annual meeting held in April, 1923, in Rome, I met Mussolini several times during a fortnight, and was surprised to learn how much he knew about the great German. . . . Out of that has come this book. . . . Frankly, it differs radically from many modern biographies, for it is written by an enthusiast who admires equally two great statesmen. He who expects it to be a critical analysis of their achievements will be disappointed. It is written by a partisan of one hero of yesterday and another of today—by one who believes a sound nationalism is the safest foundation for an understanding nationalism. A historian must be impartial, but may not a biographer enjoy the enthusiasm of partisanship?[2a]

AND the book fully carries out the promise of the introduction—it just runs wild with pæans of praise of Mussolini and not a word of criticism. No Napoleon is this Mussolini—but one far greater—according to his idolatrous biographer:

> All the world now knows that THE FASCIST HERO did not set out on the road to Austerlitz that ended in Waterloo. First he cleaned house (by sweeping out Red Communism) and then he rebuilt Italy by teaching self-discipline to that splendid nation. *Both the body and soul of Italy are better for fascism, and its inventor and leader deserves well of his compatriots.* [Emphasis ours.][3]

Jews and Christians make religious pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Moslems go to Mecca, but General Sherrill goes straight to Predappio, hallowed as the birthplace of Benito. In hushed awe, he describes the little town, the house in which he was born, the floors, the stairs, the bed in which the hero slept as a boy. In rapt wonder, the General writes:

> Strange, that so insignificant a hamlet should produce so outstanding a national regenerator! . . . Predappio has given a WORLD HERO to Italy's history! . . .
> Of course, for *us frankly avowed hero-worshippers, the sanctuary* we have come to see is the room where baby Benito, a "Sunday child," was born. Of all the birthplaces of the great which one is privileged to visit, none is more impressively simple or more decently preserved. Of course, it gives you a thrill to stand in that room! [Emphasis ours.][4]

But for the truly faithful, Sherrill cautions, a visit to Predappio, the birthplace of Benito the babe, is not enough. It must be followed by a "pious pilgrimage" to Milan, "where Mussolini was reborn," and where he "founded a new order, Fascismo." What greater tribute than this could any hero desire of his most fanatical worshipper?

General Sherrill keeps in constant touch with his hero, Mussolini. Early this year he made a special trip to Rome to go over proofs with Il Duce of a new book Sherrill has written which deals in part with Mussolini. (New York Times, March 3, 1935.) (Is it possible that the disesteem which Mussolini enjoys in America at present has anything to do with the delay in publication of this new book?)

The frontispiece to *Bismarck and Mussolini* consists of an autographed portrait of Il Duce, inscribed "to General Sherrill with lively cordiality." The love is reciprocated! Behind this portrait hangs a tale indicative alike of the General's well-known vanity and his ardent admiration for the fascist leader. It has many times graced articles and books written by the General. It first appeared in a magazine article, "Great Personages in Italy,"[5] written by Sherrill soon after his return from the Rome Olympics Committee meeting and his talks with Mussolini in 1923. The autograph is dated, "Rome, April"—(the month of Sherrill's visit to Rome in 1923) but it has no year date. Subsequently, however, as if by magic, this same portrait, with the same inscription, is seen with the year, "1918," added. Well, who can blame an avowed hero-worshipper for wishing to tell the world he knew Il Duce when . . .

The General is not above exaggeration—to say the least—in his attempts to provide excuses for fascist seizure of power in Italy.

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1 Paris. Ed. N. Y. Herald Tribune, Oct. 9, 1935.

2. Review in N. Y. Her. Trib. Books. June 14, 1931.

2a. 3. *Bismarck and Mussolini.* Intro. p. XI.

4. *Bismarck and Mussolini,* p. 42 ,144, 145.

5. *Scribner's* 1923, v. 74, p. 434.

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George Seldes, who was a newspaper correspondent in Italy during this period, in his new book on Mussolini, *Sawdust Caesar,* (p. 88), discusses the atrocity tales concocted about pre-fascist Italy in order to justify the cruelties of the fascist regime. He mentions General Sherrill as one of the tale-mongers:

> Charles H. Sherrill, general, sportsman, author and diplomat, wrote: "At Turin a Red Tribunal, composed partly of women, caused men to be thrown alive into the blast furnaces. . . . Some sailors . . . were ambushed by a band of Socialists, men and women, and literally torn to pieces, every last one of them, with all the excesses of the French Revolution—the women ripping off ears with their teeth . . ." etc. In addition to being hysterical this account, typical of reports of the time, is absolutely untrue.

Neither is the General above contradicting himself. Although in his *Bismarck and Mussolini* he readily admits that Communism ceased to be a significant factor in Italy by 1920 (see p. 179), he nonetheless finds it possible to speak of the March on Rome in 1922 " . . as the last desperate sole remedy against communistic excesses ravaging the fatherland and unrestrained by inert government."

The world knows how Mussolini's legions of Black Shirts ran riot through the streets of Italy's cities, pulling workingmen out of shops and slaughtering them in the gutters, how they tortured, mutilated and killed opponents—Communists, Socialists, liberals and even conservatives—how they carried on their gangster terror for years until all articulate opposition was stilled. (It is estimated that from 2,000 to 4,000 persons were killed by the Fascisti in their first years of power.) Yet, to General Sherrill, all this represented the triumph of "law and order" over "disorder and chaos."

Mussolini has no use for liberty. Neither has the General. In an amazing repudiation of liberty, Sherrill quotes Mussolini as saying, "Men are perhaps tired of liberty, they have had an orgy of it. If necessary we will march calmly over the decomposed corpse of liberty." To which the General adds his own heartfelt approval: *"For such talk as this, there is everywhere need today."*[6]

We have seen what the General thinks of this fascist leader. But what of fascism itself? In 1923, Sherrill enthusiastically declared: *"In the lead are the Fascisti, those gallant Black Shirts whom modern civilization will applaud, and if need be, follow."*[7] (Our emphasis.) This at a time when the "gallant Black Shirts" were carrying on a sadistic terror equalled only by the unrestrained gangsterism of the Hitler Brown Shirts a decade later! Later he was to write that "fascism . . . deserves all the attention we can give it. It affords the most striking proof in modern times that honest civilization tends toward conservatism."[8]

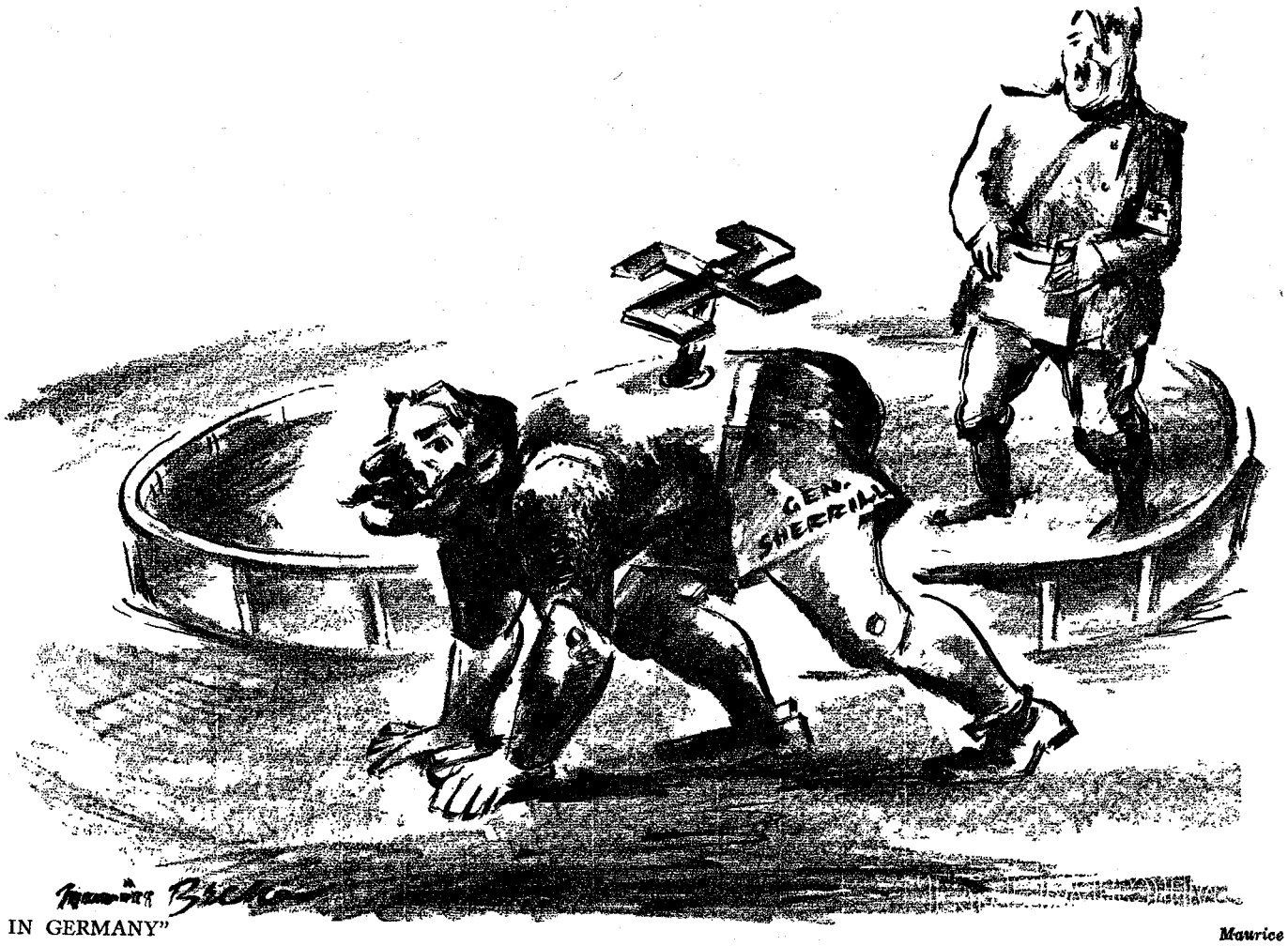
THE civilized world was shocked and horrified by the unleashing of the fascist terror by Mussolini's Black Shirts upon assuming power in 1922 and again by Hitler's Nazis in 1933. In both instances the terror included among its victims persons of all political shades: trade unionists, radicals, liberals, intellectuals and others. But all this doesn't faze General Sherrill. He has a pretty euphemism for fascist bestiality. He calls it "surgical violence." In 1931 he wrote:

> Fascism has been severely criticized by many foreign writers for having made use of violence in its efforts to purge Italy, first, of Red Communism, and, second, of inefficient government. Yes, it must be admitted that fascism did utilize violence. Mussolini would be the last man to deny it. . . . Fascism found it necessary twice to operate with surgical violence upon the body politic of Italy. The first operation was for the removal of the red cancer of Bolshevism; as was often done with grim humor—it was surgery tempered with the use of castor oil, the fascist reasoning therefore being quite logical. Any man who would practice communistic excesses must be a sick man; ergo, any man caught committing communistic excesses was given castor oil. It is extraordinary what complete cures are effected, for it was never necessary to give the same man castor oil twice.[9]

An indulgent man, this General, who can appreciate a good joke as well as the next fellow, who can see so much humor in a form of torture that Torquemada overlooked. And does it matter if those accused of "communistic excesses" included *all* opponents of the fascist regime? Certainly not to General Sherrill who wrote about the Socialists:

> Perhaps it is unfortunate that this new word Bolshevism has come out of Russia and has been so generally taken up by the press of the world, for it enables the Socialist party elsewhere in Europe to sidestep the responsibility of blood-brotherhood with it. As it is, Socialists, thanks to

6. *Bismarck and Mussolini,* p. 163.
7. *Scribner's,* v. 74, 1923, p. 434-44.
8. *The Purple or the Red,* p. 227.
9. *Bismarck and Mussolini,* p. 183.



"MADE IN GERMANY" *Maurice Becker*

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> possessing an innocuous name, are able to carry on and to claim that theirs is a different system from that which under its label of Bolshevism has made such a hideous failure in Russia. Socialism has a way of constantly shifting its ground, but the underlying fact is that wherever Socialism arrives politically, it proves to be Communism. (*The Purple or the Red,* p. 165.)

THE whole civilized world has condemned the training of the members of the Italian fascist youth organization, the Balilla —comprising children from eight to fourteen years of age—with real bayoneted rifles for future warfare. An Associated Press dispatch of November 11, 1935, significantly reveals the fate that awaits these youngsters, if Mussolini has his way. Under the head, "Horror of War Shown in Italian Parade," the dispatch reads:

> Rome, Nov. 11—The horrors of war, along with its glories, were shown in today's great military parade. . . . Premier Benito Mussolini especially saluted two battalions of crippled soldiers, mostly World War veterans.
>
> The parade was headed by the Balilla, Black Shirt boys, carrying genuine miniature rifles.[10]

A rather unlovely picture; one generation shattered by war and the next being prepared for the slaughter. Nevertheless, in this very Balilla, our fascist-loving General seems an ideal sports model for the youth of the world. First he pays tribute to the fascist militia, whose slogan is "Believe, Obey, Fight." He is enthused by these "youthful and bright-faced Black Shirts, an organized support offered to the state by its Giovinezza, eager to discharge the duties of citizenship even before the age for regular military service."[11] Then he comes triumphantly to Il Duce's great achievement in athletic organization—the Balilla:

> We have purposely and rightly laid accent upon the utilization of youth in the recruiting and the continuing vigor of these Fascist militia, but back of it and before the young men come the boys of the land—What about them? Have they been disregarded in Mussolini's "scheme of things entire"? They have not, because for them he has set up a picturesque organization called the Balilla.

Picturesque is the word for it; in fascist-land military life begins at eight! It is tied up closely with sports. Listen to this description of the routine of Italian athletes by our ardent believer in "sports for sport's sake":

> Come with me to the window of the Grand Hotel in Rome overlooking the Piazza della Terme and let us witness a result of this law [of April, 1926, in which Mussolini created the Balilla for boys from 8 to 14, and the Avanguardisti, for boys from 14 to 18, and the Piccole Italiane for girls.] It is the morning of Sunday, May 6, 1928. Although it is only eight o'clock, organizations of girl athletes are already assembled there, marching in from all points of the compass. . . . All are attired in fascist colors—white skirts and black shirts, caps and stockings. Some wear black capes thrown back over one shoulder which swirl out effectively when the squad faces sharply at "Front into line" snapped out in Italian by their officers. Here is the flower of Italian womanhood. . . . Splendid young people, fitting mothers for the Young Italy of Tomorrow. . . . Already, and ever since the beginning of the fascist movement, Mussolini has enjoyed the unanimous and enthusiastic support of Italian young men, but *now by this feminine athletic movement he is rounding out the Giovinezza movement* that means the heart and soul of the nation's revival. . . . Even phlegmatic students of the rejuvenation of Italy's Today must admit that its Tomorrow promises even greater things, thanks to his generous inclusion of the youngsters. [Our emphasis.][12]

What an inspiring spectacle—a nation's youth regimented for war under the guise of athletics! Truly, the General is a man of vision.

But would American mothers and fathers like to see their children thus militarized, marching in the "neat uniforms" bedecked with fascist insignia, taught the manual of arms as soon as they've learned to walk? This is precisely the model that Sherrill holds up for American boys and girls to follow! Some months ago, the General was the principal speaker at a meeting of the Women's Roosevelt Memorial Association in New York, where he presented medallions to 250 school children for making the best speeches about Theodore Roosevelt. In reporting the General's speech, The New York Times (February 28, 1935), says: "He extolled the 'patriotic services' performed in Italy by the Balilla, or fascist youth organization, and *suggested that a similar spirit of usefulness might be developed in organized groups of American youth.*" (Our emphasis.)

And this is the kind of organization that General Sherrill, our "impartial sports arbiter," would like to create for children of tender years in America. Sports for sport's sake? Hasn't the General proclaimed that sports should be free of politics, and hasn't he charged that the opponents of the Nazi Olympics are trying to "inject" politics into sports? Yet this same gentleman fully endorses Mussolini's use of sports for jingoistic purposes, to "round out the Giovinezza movement," and even dares to sponsor such a perversion of athletics in this country! Is this man a fit representative of American youth on the International Olympics Committee?

WHILE General Sherrill's major passion is Mussolini, he is a strong admirer of personal dictators generally. To him they represent symbols of a new—and highly desirable—order. They sweep away "rotten" democratic parliamentarism, "inefficient government," and of course, the "Reds," and substitutes rugged, efficient, honest government. We find him quoting with approval Mussolini's statement that the March on Rome "had been directed against evil politicians and parliamentary customs, against degenerate democracy." Fascism institutes "law and order" in place of chaos and as we have seen the General's conception of "law and order" is democracy-killing terrorism, union-busting. One thing in particular he likes about fascist dictatorships. They destroy those troublesome pests, the labor unions, a procedure the General can appreciate, being president and a director of the Berkshire Fine Spinning Associates, the largest fine-spinning combine in New England and a leading foe of labor organization. During a Congressional Committee hearing in 1933, an executive of this company proudly boasted that its women employes earned the munificent wages of $12 to $13 weekly for a 55-hour week and that "you'd find our plant just a happy family."[13] Incidentally members of this "happy family" went out on strike in April of this year against wage cuts. The strike was crushed. General Sherrill's company does not recognize the United Textile Workers' Union or any other labor organization.

We have noted Sherrill's admiration of Hitler. Last year the General wrote a whole book on another dictator, Mustafa Kemal of Turkey, whom he called, in a momentary deviation of loyalty to Il Duce, "the greatest statesman in Europe."[14] (Sherrill was Hoover's ambassador to Turkey for one year.)

In 1921 Sherrill met another dictator who looms large in his pantheon of fascist gods, His Serene Highness, Admiral Horthy. At this time the latter's hands were still dripping with the blood of thousands of massacred in the White Terror unleashed when he came to power. Horthy, in Sherrill's opinion, is just another of those brave, strong patriots who cleaned out an "inefficient government (i.e., a democratic one) and set up a dictatorship that meets with his full approval. Of his meeting with dictator Horthy, he writes in 1924:

> The impression he then made upon me was that which he makes upon all visitors—excellent! Sturdy, almost stocky of build, a regular monitor of a seaman, with quiet, steady eyes and a jaw of a Hercules, revealing a clearness of thought and promptness of decision. . . . Efficient in battle and administration.[15]

The people of Hungary and Austria had risen up in 1918 and kicked out the Hapsburg dynasty. Now, if there's anything Sherrill dislikes as much as "inefficient" democratic government, it is an unused crown. The Hapsburg crown was lying idle and what was more logical for the General than to nominate the bloody Horthy or that worthy's right-hand man, Count Bethlen, to fill it. "Why not place the crown on Admiral Horthy's or Count Bethlen's head and thus remove the temptation of an alluring vacancy?" he asks.

Anti-Semitism was one of the three principal slogans raised by Horthy. Horthy unloosed a series of pogroms against the Jews unparalleled in modern times in its blood-

10. N. Y. Times. Nov. 12, 1935.
11. *Bismarck and Mussolini,* p. 299.
12. *Bismarck and Mussolini,* p. 233.
13. Hearing before House Labor Committee, May 2, 1933.
14. *A Year's Embassy to Mustafa Kemal.* N. Y., 1934.
15. *The Purple or the Red,* p. 44.

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spilling excesses. The White Terror carried on for years during his regime was equalled only by Mussolini and Hitler for cold-blooded cruelty. Hundreds of liberals, republicans, Socialists and Reds were buried alive, dismembered, flayed alive or burned at the stake —200 opponents of the regime were massacred in one mass in the Orgovany forest. Documentary authentication exists for these facts.[17] In short, this was a man and a regime of "law and order" that was perfectly suited to Sherrill's ideal of civilized government.

Other dictators for whom Sherrill has expressed unqualified admiration include the late Alexander of Jugoslavia, whose sadistic cruelties to workers and peasants have been so vividly described by Louis Adamic, a native of Jugoslavia; and Primo de Rivera, who ruled Spain with an iron fist for more than six years (ending in 1929 when the oppressed Spanish people rose up against him). Of this dictatorship Sherrill said: "It deserves success, and that it will succeed in all its patriotic endeavors is the hearty wish of every foreign friend of Spain." (*Purple or the Red,* p. 116.)

The General is not one to withhold credit where credit is due, and to King Alfonso XIII (who is now, regrettably, ex-), Sherrill accords full measure:

> And what of the King in all this affair? Suppose he had not properly recognized *something that now every one knows—the efficacy of this type of movement (dictatorship) to purify politics* and the same time to prevent Red Revolution—to kill two birds of prey with the same stone? Suppose he had hesitated, as did Louis XVI? He hastened to Madrid . . . telephoned General Primo de Rivera . . . and commissioned him to form a new government. . . . If Alfonso XIII never does another useful act for his admiring countrymen, he has justified his existence. (*Purple or the Red,* p. 77, ff.)

Verily, if Louis XVI had had an adviser like Sherrill to counsel him as to the utility of getting a strong man, he might have saved his head and crown, and saved France from that "terrible democratic republic," with its vulgar motto of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

NEXT to dictators, Sherrill loves kings, ex-kings and would-be-kings. In fact, his literary endeavors during the past twelve years have consisted almost exclusively of writing in praise of monarchs when he isn't busy writing in praise of dictatorships. He has a great collection of royal portraits personally inscribed to him. One finds these literally plastered over his books and articles since 1923. "There is a magnificence about a king of ancient lineage," he says, "that makes an appeal to public imagination impossible for a politically elected president."[18] He has met—lest we seem irreverant, let us note, in fairness to General Sherrill, that he seldom falls so low as to speak of "meeting" royal personages; he invariably has "the great honor to be presented to" this or that imperial highness—most of the kings and queens of Europe and he found them all, without exception, charming, intelligent, lofty-minded, sincere, honest and brave. He deplores the fact that the Hapsburgs are not reigning over Austria and Hungary (Review of Reviews, March 1931). He would like to see the monarchical form of government restored to Germany (Review of Reviews, December, 1931.) Probably nothing would suit him better than to see a Hohenzollern reigning there with Hitler dictating. He was saddened by the overthrow of Portugal's monarchy in 1910 and the substitution of a republican form of government. "Speaking as citizens of a republic," he asks, "can we claim that Portugal is better off since she turned from a monarchical to a republican form of government? It is more than doubtful."[19] (This was written before the overthrow of the Portuguese republic in 1926.)

The General feels that it would be a calamity if the people of Japan should ever decide to throw over the Emperor, the Sunking himself, and establish a republic such as ours. "A family that has uninterruptedly occupied the throne for twenty-five centuries! —think what a symbol of stability, of governmental continuity this must mean to a people whose respect for it rises to the level of a national religion. . . . Frankly, does not the reader agree that if Japan tomorrow became a republic, abolishing royalty and the respect therefore enjoined by the Shinto religion, it would then be a far less reliable bulwark against Bolshevism than it is today?"

General Sherrill finds all the crowned potentates of Europe eminently fitted for the heroic role they have to play. They are all passionate lovers of the good, the true and the beautiful. He speaks of Alfonso with hushed awe. The little king of Italy looms as a gigantic hero before his worshipful eyes. Sherrill was particularly fond of the late Alexander of Yugoslavia (whose medieval modes of torturing political prisoners have been vividly described by his countryman, Louis Adamic), and proudly dedicated one of his books to Alexander "by special permission."

Marie of Rumania also deserves the gratitude of the world for her match-making achievements, says Sherrill, for hasn't she forged a peaceful bond in the Balkans? Behold the Balkans, just one big happy family of nations!

The General is properly respectful and loyal even to ex-kings. In an article describing his visit to the ex-Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany at his Doorn estate in 1930, Sherrill somehow forgets that Wilhelm has been deposed these many years. Wilhelm always is referred to as the Kaiser, the Emperor, His Majesty; the ex-king's wife is Her Majesty, the Empress Ermine to Sherrill. Never a thought of using the prefix ex or the adjective former.

The story is told and vouched for by a prominent American that Sherrill attended a dinner given in Brussels a few years ago in honor of the Duke and Duchess of Guise, exiled pretenders to the French throne. He came attired with his silver diplomatic band, as if to an affair of state. As he bent to kiss the hand of the Duchess, he fervently remarked, with true aristocratic gallantry: "I only wear this [band] in the presence of royalty, and I consider you royalty." A fine tribute to our sister republic of France!

The General wrote his remarkable book, *The Purple or the Red,* in 1924. This book constitutes a vigorous defense of monarchy against its republican opponents. Incidentally, it also champions dictatorships. His ideal is to have a monarch *to reign* and a fascist-dictator *to rule.* The theme of the book, Sherrill proudly tells us, was inspired by no less a personage than Mussolini himself, who urged the General to write it. Its thesis is stated in the first sentence of the introduction: "On June 8, 1923, before a crowded meeting of the Italian Senate, Prime Minister Mussolini declared that 'the person of the king is the symbol of the Fatherland!' "

If the General has a fondness for royalty, he is no less fond of the resplendent functions that are associated with the Purple. One of his chapters in *The Purple or the Red* is devoted almost entirely to the glorious pageantry at England's court. Pages and pages are given over to minute descriptions of royal processions, royal levees and royal courts—at all of which, the General is at pains to point out, he has been a delighted attendant.

IT WOULD be surprising, indeed, in view of the foregoing facts, if the General were not also a strident imperialist. We are not disappointed on this score. He has given blanket approval to all of Mussolini's imperialistic designs. He even finds it possible to defend the notorious Corfu incident of 1923, when the Duce, without provocation or warning, sent the Italian fleet to bombard the Greek island of Corfu, killing twenty persons, including sixteen babies who were under the care of the American Red Cross. He vigorously defends fascist colonial expansion in East Africa, where Mussolini's Black Shirts are now waging "civilized" war with poison gas and air bombings against helpless villages of men, women and children—action which has won Italy the condemnation of fifty-four nations as civilization's public enemy No. 1.

The General is a strong advocate of imperialistic aggression in Asia too. When the Japanese seized Shantung in 1915 and forced its "Fifteen Points" on China, Sherrill wrote a whole pamphlet in defense of this brazen piece of imperialist robbery. The General sanctions Japanese expansion not only in China, but in Soviet Russia as well. In fact,

17. Oscar Jaszi's *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary.*
18. *The Purple or the Red,* p. 116.
19. *Ibid,* p. 101.

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since 1920, he has been thumping the drums for a "holy war" by Japan against Russia. In a book on the Far East written in 1920 and championing Japanese hegemony in that region with all the fervor of a paid propagandist, Sherrill artfully raises the bogey of the "Red menace," and then continues bluntly:

> A great service can be rendered to civilization by stopping this Siberian outlet of anarchy, and because the Japanese are the only ones who can perform this service, all law-abiding men should encourage them to do so. *I believe it would be a fine thing for international law and order if Japan should occupy Eastern Siberia* and there set up such a dam against the outflow of lawlessness as would be afforded by her excellently functioning government. [20]

The most fanatic Japanese militarist could desire no better apology for launching an imperialist war against a peaceful power. As if this were not enough, General Sherrill slyly suggests that a deal should be made whereby, in return for American encouragement in pushing an expansionist war against the Soviet Union, Japan would withdraw from the Caroline and Marshall Islands, thus terminating that geographical threat to the Phillipines.

As we have earlier intimated, when Sherrill recently visited Hitler, ostensibly as a representative of the International Olympics Committee, sport was not the only topic discussed between the dictator and the dictator-lover. On the subject of Soviet Russia they apparently found much in common, for in a speech delivered in Paris shortly after his talks with Hitler, Sherrill assured his audience that "Hitler wants to make friends with France," and that Germany's expansion aims pointed East instead of West. "After the interview [with Hitler]" he declared, "I was asked to come to Nuremberg for the Nazi rally as Hitler's guest. I stayed four days and during that time Hitler spoke again of Russia." In its report on his speech, the Paris edition of The Herald Tribune (Oct. 9, 1935), states "In General Sherrill's opinion, Russia is the contemplated field for future German colonization. Speaking of Germany's chances in Russia, General Sherrill declared that contrary to propaganda, Russia had a poor army."

If Sherrill endorses Japan's imperialistic aims on Siberia, can he find Hitler's ambition to grab the Ukraine any less palatable?

THE General protests that he is a friend of the Jews. In fact, he doth protest too much. He finds very strange ways of manifesting this friendship, as when he terms the movement to take the Olympics out of Berlin, a "Jewish movement," deliberately ignoring the fact that the non-Jewish organizations and individuals involved in this movement are far more numerous than the Jewish ones. The General, in his many speeches and statements on the subject has tried to make it appear that only the Jews are interested in seeing the place of the Olympics changed, while his associate Brundage falls upon the equally facile device of labeling all opponents of Berlin as a site of the Olympics, "Communists." Sherrill knows full well that the membership of the American Federation of Labor, which officially opposes the Nazi state, alone totals more than all the Jews in the United States. The General knows full well that it is no more a Jewish question than it is a Negro, a Catholic, a Protestant, question. It is true that Jews have been persecuted in Hitler's Germany, but so have Catholics, Protestants, trade unionists, Socialists, Communists, liberals and others. One has only to glance at a partial list of individuals and organizations on record against holding the 1936 Olympics in Germany to see the broad basis upon which this movement rests. Such a list would include some 144 organizations like the Federal Council of Churches of Christ, the Catholic War Veterans, several state departments of the American Legion, branches of the Amateur Athletic Union, the city council of Baltimore, the National Council of Methodist Youth, the A.F. of L., and such individuals as Governors Earle of Pennsylvania and Curley of Massachusetts, Senators Capper, Walsh, Gerry and King, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Heywood Broun, Mayor LaGuardia, Judge Jeremiah T. Mahoney, Dr. Mary E. Woolley, Jack Dempsey, Jesse Owens and many other notables.

Readers may remember the ominous threat he held out to the Jews should they persist in pushing the Olympics boycott, calling himself in the same breath their friend. Judge Mahoney has rightly stated that "Sherrill is no more a friend of the Jews than Hitler." The General has sorrowfully declared that "the torrent of Jewish abuse poured upon me cannot succeed in making me anti-Jewish." Why, if the General is the friend he professes to be, did he find it necessary to insult that people by telling reporters, upon his recent return from Germany that "Streicher is a horrendous-looking person and therefore must be a Jew, a renegade Jew."

The truth is that General Sherrill has been indulging in suspiciously anti-Jewish acts over a period of many years. One of the most familiar devices utilized by Hitler in his attacks against the Jews is to charge Communists with all the atrocities ever invented in man's fertile brain, and then to declare that Communism is purely a Jewish movement. The utility of this device as an anti-Semitic weapon is easily recognizable. Sherrill was using it years before Hitler's ascension to power. In 1920, for instance, in a peroration championing the monarchic system of government for all Asia, the General suddenly launches into a statement entirely out of context with his discussion:

> Of the 380 Bolshevist Commissars constituting their [Soviet] government in all parts European Russia and Siberia, 286 were Russian Jews who lived in America, and nearly all in New York City's lower East Side. . . . Trotsky was evidently not the only viper we warmed at our national bosom.[21]

It is not necessary to go into details on the obvious absurdity of these statistics. The point is: does Sherrill show himself "a friend of the Jews" by repeating this untruth in such slurring fashion? Why, if the General is not anti-Semitic, does he find it necessary, while cataloging the "atrocities" of the Hungarian and Russian Soviets, to pick out for special mention the Jews and alleged Jews involved, always carefully emphasizing their Jewish names? He seldom mentions Trotsky, for instance, without parenthetically adding (Braunstein), as in the following fantastic tale:

> We tend to forget that it was from the lower East Side of New York City that Trotsky (Braunstein) went to take control of the great Russian people, and that two-thirds of the Commissars through whom the Moscow machine dominates that broad land from the Baltic to the Black Sea to the Pacific also came from the same Manhattan centre of Communism.[22]

Writing (in 1924) of the short-lived Hungarian Soviet of 1919, he finds a peculiar pleasure in singling out the Jewish individuals among its participants for particular derogatory remarks. He invariably refers to them as Bela Kun (Kohen), Szamuelly (Samuels) and Otto Karvin (Klein). In view of the fact that Sherrill is here relating "terror tales" which, he is at pains to note, he received at first hand from Dictator Horthy himself (who as an anti-Semite second only to Hitler), the inference which he is trying to draw is obvious.

It is true that elsewhere the General valiantly rushes to the defense of the "Have" Jews against the charge that Communism is entirely a Jewish movement and that all Jews are Communists. It is *only* the "Have Not" Jews who are Communists and who *control* the Soviets in Russia!

General Sherrill's characterization of the take-the-Olympics-out-of-Berlin movement as a purely Jewish one and his repeated "warnings" to the Jews of anti-Semitic reprisals can by no stretch of the imagination be construed as a friendly gesture to the Jews. If one were deliberately trying to stir up racial and religious hatreds in this country, he could devise no better plan than the General has been pursuing. Judge Mahoney is again justified in noting the similarity between Sherrill's speeches on the Olympics and Herr Goebbels' propaganda releases. No friend of the Jews, this, but a subtle anti-Semite!

If we have proved that General Sherrill is all that we charged him with being at the outset of this article—an idolator of royalty, a worshipper of Mussolini, an admirer of Hitler and all other fascist dictators, a defender of fascist terror, a rampant imperialist, a war-monger, a breeder of racial hatreds, contemptuous of democracy—and we think we have, then General Sherrill assuredly is discredited as a spokesman of anything American, be it sports or aught else.

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20. Sherrill, *Have We a Far Eastern Policy?* N. Y., 1920, p. 301-2.

21. *The Purple or the Red,* p. 117.

22. *Have We a Far Eastern Policy?,* p. 188.

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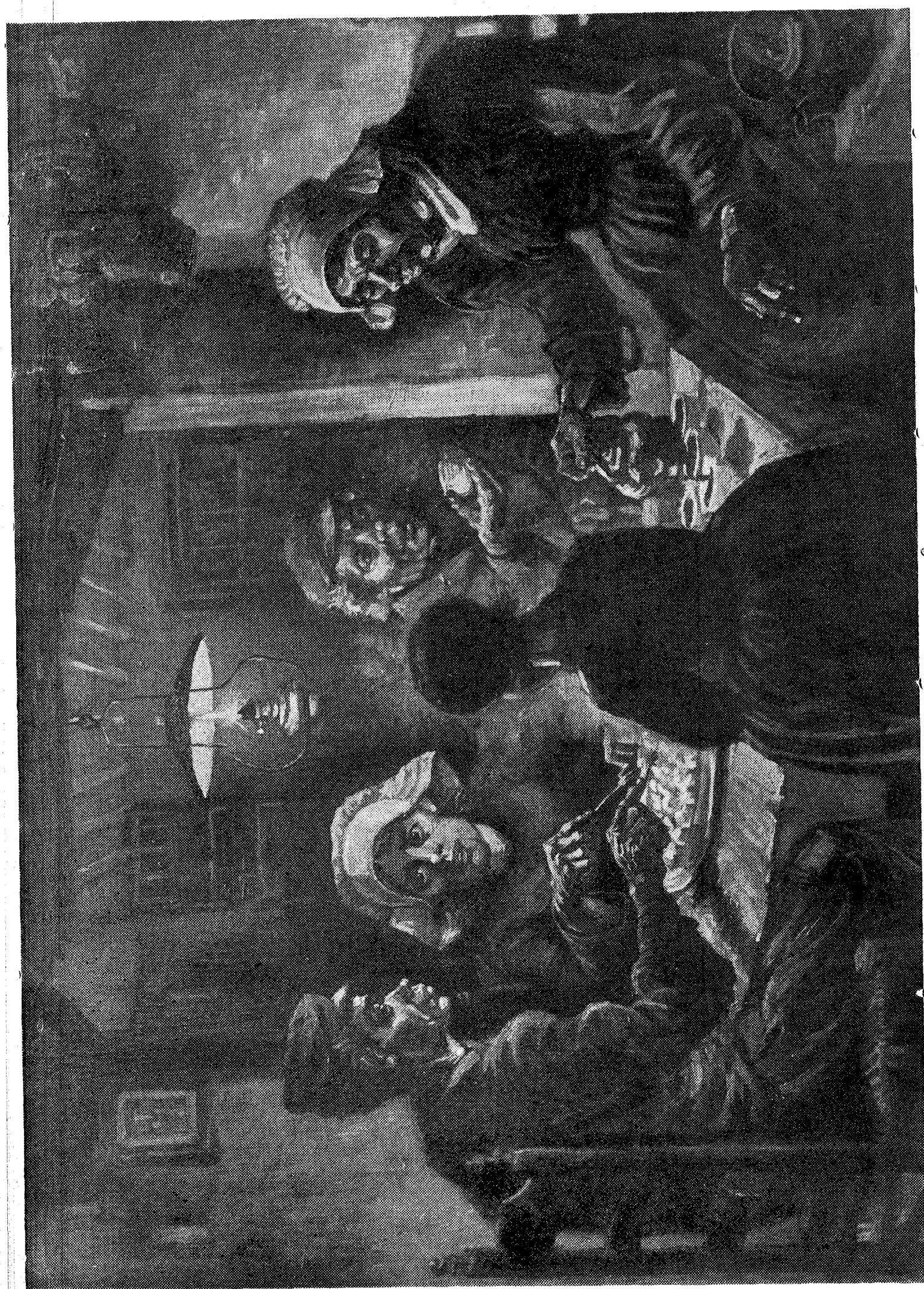

Vincent Van Gogh—Museum of Modern Art

THE POTATO EATERS

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Industrial Insurance

A Snare for Workers

MORT GILBERT and E. A. GILBERT

AMERICAN workers are bitterly aware of their need for life insurance. For them, the menace of insecurity, the threat of sudden death attended by pauper burial and unprotected dependents, is formidable and ever-present. So it is a holiday task for the largest and most efficient high-pressure selling organizations in the world to induce them to carry industrial insurance—on the "easy-payment" plan. This form of insurance provides a few hundred dollars in the event of death and calls for a weekly outlay of five cents or a small multiple of that amount, such as a dime, fifteen cents or a quarter. Hence, it is commonly known as "Five-and-Dime" insurance.

Another current term for this kind of protection is "burial" insurance. Fifty million workers or their children can theoretically have funerals costing an aggregate sum of seventeen *billion* dollars—the total face amount of the insurance in force. Burial insurance? In one year, the nickels and dimes which the working class "buries" in the insurance companies amount to eight hundred million dollars. The average worker, that is to say, expends about six percent of his annual income for the single item of industrial insurance.

The vastness of the business has made it respectable, exempting it from the general condemnation that smaller rackets evoke. Nevertheless, investigators of industrial insurance have arisen to protest against its iniquities. Comprehensive indictments have been drawn up by Dr. Maurice Taylor, Percy E. Budlong, Jack Bradon, L. Seth Schnitman, Abraham Epstein and others. Nor does one have to be an expert to discover the defectiveness of industrial insurance. The discovery weighs heavily upon the consciences of most of the men who sell it. When Abraham Epstein published an article entitled "The Insurance Racket," in The American Mercury (September, 1930), many industrial agents wrote to him, bewailing and apologizing for their calling. Here are excerpts from two typical letters:

> As an industrial agent I feel you merit the thanks of the thousands of industrial insurance agents who are daily driven and hounded to sell this petty larceny form of insurance. We agents sell this stuff, but we hate to do it; we know that the companies are robbing the industrial classes with a contract which is scandalously exhorbitant in rate and negligible in benefits.

> I had agents come to my home and tell me with tears in their eyes that they hate this industrial insurance robbery but they cannot help it. Their wives and children must eat.

Industrial insurance is big business, levying an enormous tribute upon those least able to pay. Masquerading as a benevolent institution devoted to the protection of widows and orphans, it has prospered at the expense of its ostensible beneficiaries. Some indication of what this expense has been may be gleaned from its phenomenal size and growth. In 1910, industrial insurance cost the working class 103 million dollars; in 1920, $257 million; in five years the expenditure jumped to half a billion; by 1930, it reached $803 million and has been able to hold its own against the storms of the past five years. Here is aggrandizement with a vengeance: Industrial insurance is a business that, barring economic calamity, doubles itself as a matter of course every few years. The familiar law of concentration has not spared industrial insurance. Of the sixty-five companies reporting to the Insurance Year Book, the "Big Three"—the Metropolitan, the Prudential and the John Hancock—account for almost nine-tenths of the business.

On the face of it, industrial insurance is healthy enough and big enough to protect the working class against certain hazards. Yet it has failed—miserably. Back in 1906, Louis D. Brandeis, now a Supreme Court Justice, dubbed industrial insurance "The greatest life-insurance wrong." Let us examine the business as it is today, to determine, on the basis of accomplishment, whether there is any foundation to the widespread belief that the wrong has been righted.

THE best way to begin is to look at a policy. One's suspicions are aroused immediately by the abstruseness of the terminology employed. The opening paragraph of a Metropolitan contract will illustrate:

> IN CONSIDERATION of the payment of the premium stated in the schedule on page 4 hereof, on or before each Monday doth hereby agree subject to the conditions below and on page 2 hereof each of which is hereby made a part of this contract and contracted by every person entitled to claim hereunder to be a part hereof to pay as an endowment 20 years from the date hereof if the insured be then living, upon surrender of this policy and evidence of premium payment hereunder, the amount stipulated in said schedule.

Well, skip it. The point to be observed is that this is part of a contract, to be read and signed by two parties, henceforth binding them to certain conditions; the company deliberately makes the contract so unintelligible to the buyer that he will know nothing of what he is getting. The reasons behind the obfuscation become apparent when we consider the disadvantageous terms and provisions which he unwittingly accepts.

The most inexcusable of these provisions is the so-called Express Warranty or "Sound Health" clause. Industrial insurance presumably offers protection without evidence of insurability, no medical examination being required. This is, of course, a good sales-point on its face; the catch is that the examination may be made after death through an implication of the "Sound Health" clause. Stripped of verbiage, the "Sound Health" clause declares that if the policy-holder is not in "sound health" on the date the policy is issued, or if he has ever had any one of a long list of diseases, the policy is void; in that case, the company need not pay a death claim, its liability being limited to returning the premiums paid on the policy. Most industrial policy-holders never heard of the clause; those who have do not understand that its effect is to destroy the certainty of protection, since any one of the diseases may be present in a latent form without the knowledge of the "insured." Every physician knows that the victims of such diseases are usually not aware of their existence until the advanced stages set in; moreover, few people who reach middle-age escape the incipient stage of at least one of the catalog of ailments listed in Express Warranty.

The Supreme Court of Nebraska comments (49 Nebr. 842):

> What sane man would consciously warrant that ever since his childhood he had not had any disease of the heart, liver, lungs, kidneys, bladder, stomach, or bowels? No sane man would consciously consent that on the literal truth of his negative answer . . . should depend the validity of a life-insurance policy.

In 282 Southwestern Reporter, 633, it is held:

> It would seem unjust to void a policy based upon statements made in good faith by proving after death by expert medical examiners that in their opinion death was caused by some latent ailment of which the insured . . . knew nothing and had no means of knowing, in the absence of a medical examination.

The company does more than protect itself against fraud on the part of the applicant: through the Express Warranty provision, it protects itself against his lack of omniscience. Percy E. Budlong, official reporter of the United States Senate, points out the injustice of the clause:

> No one will claim that educated and experienced business men could be sold an ordinary life policy containing a binding condition prece-

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> dent of absolute freedom from disease. No shipowner would specifically warrant his vessel free from all concealed defects in hull or machinery. . . . No owner of a building would warrant that there was no fire risk about his premises. Then why make the poor, ignorant industrial applicant warrant that he is and always has been perfectly healthy.

THAT the provision tends to defeat the purpose of insurance is attested by the innumerable court cases on record. Case after case concerns beneficiaries who, suing to collect the death benefit promised in the policy, were successfully denied any compensation on the ground that, at the issue-date of the contract, the "insured" had a latent disease which subsequently proved fatal. There are even cases in which the policy was voided because of an incipient disease which contributed nothing to the death of the policy-holder. In the instance of Barker v. Metropolitan Life (188 Mass. 543), after the company physician had declared the insured to be in sound health, it later appeared that he had cystic disease of the kidneys. The insured ultimately died—of pneumonia. The company repudiated the findings of its own doctor, but failed to show any connection between the pneumonia and the alleged kidney disease. In its refusal to allow a death benefit, it was, nevertheless, sustained by the courts. Another case: a policy-holder who apparently had hernia when he bought the policy, succumbed to valvular heart disease and dropsy (184 Indiana, 722). The court held that inasmuch as the policy was voided by the existence of hernia, the actual causes of death could have no influence upon such a policy.

On the basis of the "Sound Health" clause alone, it can be seen that an industrial policy is a gamble. Not until after the death of the insured can the beneficiary know whether the contract was ever in force. If the company contests the policy, the beneficiary—notwithstanding his hypothetical equality before the law—is compelled to accept whatever terms of settlement the company deigns to offer. For the class served by industrial insurance cannot afford the expense and delay of litigation; the company, on the other hand, is prepared to use the best legal talent available and to appeal and re-appeal if the verdict should be adverse.

Policy-holders overlook the intent of Express Warranty not only because it is obscurely worded, but because another provision apparently nullifies it. This provision—and agents are always quick to point it out to the prospective buyer—is the Incontestability Clause. Unlike the rest of the contract, it is distinguished for its lucidity, since it is a selling-point. Its main portion reads:

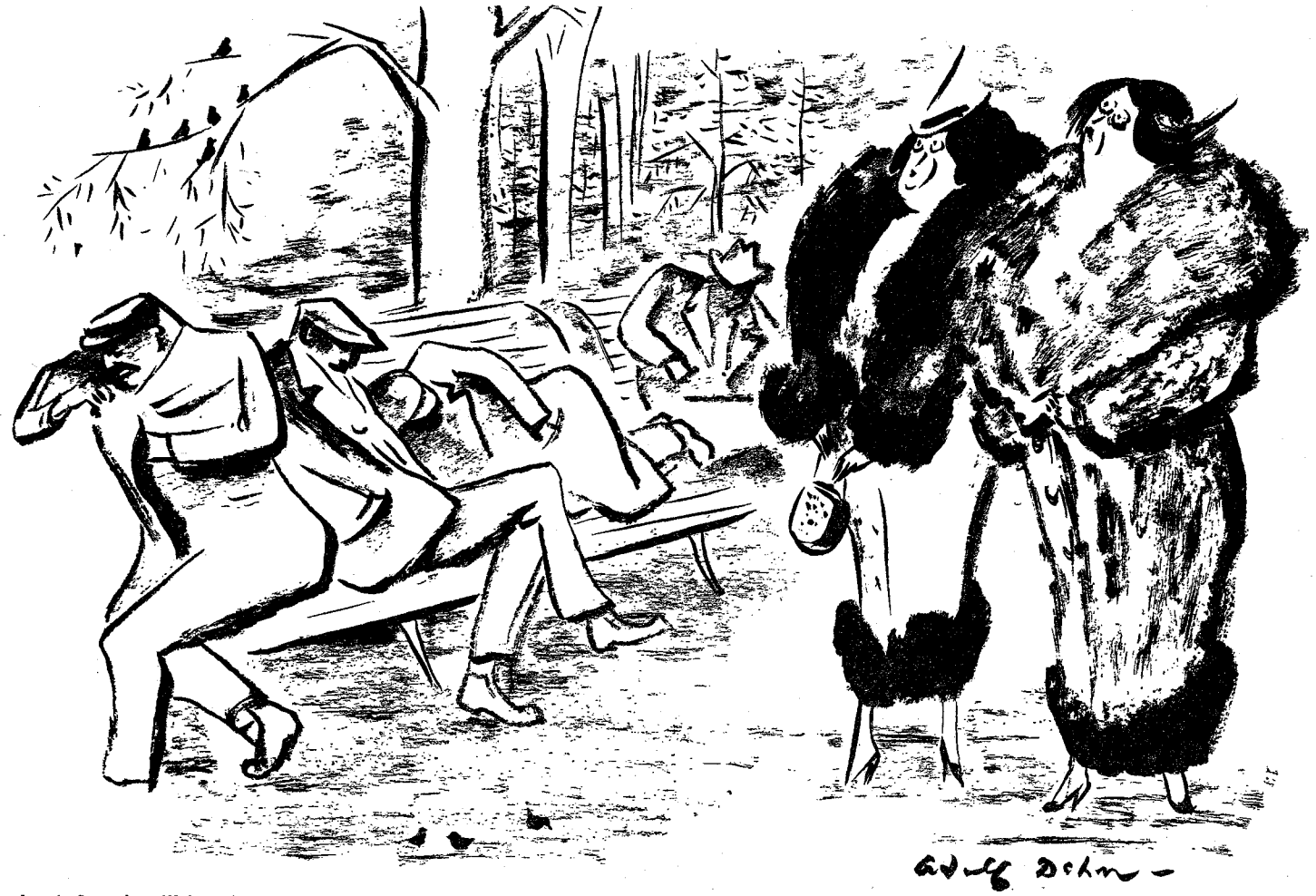
> After this policy shall have been in force, during the lifetime of the insured, for one full year from its date, it shall be incontestable, except for non-payment of premium.

The clause is nicely worded and should sound very good with music. It should especially hearten those who have been denied a death benefit by virtue of the Express Warranty provision. How, it may be asked, can the two clauses be reconciled? The joker is contained in the words *shall have been in force*. Although the insured pays premiums for a number of years, that fact alone does not signify that the policy was ever in force. The company is contractually justified in its contention that, if the "Sound Health" clause was violated, the policy has been void from the beginning. It is tricky but true that a policy which has never been *in force* can never be incontestable. This delightful technicality, it should be mentioned, has so offended the sense of fitness of several judges when it has been raised in court, that the companies were subjected to blistering censure. Consequently, as far as the courts are concerned, the argument is falling into disuse; the companies still employ it, however, in the unrecorded thousands of cases that never come to court.

Another questionable provision in the contract, one which has been the source of considerable dispute and disappointment, is the "Facility-of-Payment" clause. In substance it provides that:

> The company may make any payment provided herein to the insured, or to any relative by blood or connection by marriage of the insured, or to any other person appearing to the company to be equitably entitled to such payment by reason of having incurred expense on behalf of the insured, or for his or her burial; and the production of a receipt signed by any of said persons shall be conclusive evidence that all claims under this policy have been satisfied.

In other words, the company can legally discharge all its obligations by paying any relative of the policy-holder or a virtual



"Oh, dear! Soon it will be winter again and we will have to start worrying about the poor little birds!" *Adolf Dehn*

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stranger, such as an undertaker. What is more, if the company can find someone who is willing to accept less than the amount called for, and can persuade him to sign a receipt, it is absolved from any further payment. The average policy-holder believes that the beneficiary he selected at the time he signed his application will receive the proceeds of his policy when it matures as a death claim. While they encourage him in this belief, it is not warranted: at his death, the company has the contractual right to ignore his intended beneficiary.

The companies defend this right on the ground that it "facilitates" settlement of the claim. Admitting the element of truth in their contention, it is still obvious that the clause is open to the grossest of abuse. Citation of a few court cases will illustrate how it can thwart the express wishes of the policy-holder. In the case of Brennan v. Prudential Insurance Company (32 Atlantic Reporter 1042), the sentiment of the Court of Common Pleas of Lackawanna County, Pa., is of interest:

> Here the company paid but a part of the money [less than half], and set up this to bar the whole. This, it is contended, does not fall within the strict terms of the policy, because it is only the payment of the amount named in the policy, and the production of a receipt for that full amount, that is to work satisfaction. To allow of anything less than this, it is argued, is to invite fraud. If the company may select their own party, and settle with him on his own terms, they can pick up anybody, and discharge themselves with a mere song.

The case moved on to the trial court which, though granting the reasonableness of the foregoing argument, was compelled nonetheless to sustain the company. Commenting upon the inclusive powers which the Facility-of-Payment clause confers upon the company, the trial justice said:

> If, therefore, the company may determine to whom they will pay, they may also make their own terms with him; and if he sees fit to take 50 cents on the dollar, or any other sum, in settlement of the amount insured, it concerns no one but himself, and the company are discharged.

In the case of Diggs v. Metropolitan Life (vol. 70, Pittsburgh Legal Journal, p. 988), the syllabus informs us that:

> Plaintiff, brother and beneficiary of [the deceased policy-holder] sued to recover on a policy which contained the "facility of payment" clause. . . . The evidence showed that the brother . . . who was beneficiary in the policy, acting upon his supposed right to the money, had incurred the expense of burying the insured, and the husband, who received the money from the company, paid no part of these expenses.

Adhering to the letter of the contract, the Common Pleas Court of Allegheny County upheld the company, but remarked:

> We do not understand why people buy and pay for insurance of this kind. It is no doubt true that the clause in question would sometimes prevent expense [and litigation], but it certainly puts in the hands of the agents of companies carrying on this sort of insurance a power which is very likely to be abused, especially if it be allowed that a payment of less than the whole sum is sufficient to discharge the company, as the agent will be *likely to pay the party who is willing to take the least money. We cannot help but believe that a great injustice has been done . . . but we do not see how it can be remedied, in view of the terms of the policy.* [Our emphasis.]

THE two provisions already examined—Express Warranty and Facility-of-Payment—in themselves establish the vicious one-sidedness of the industrial contract. Indeed, the very right of an industrial policy to be called a contract is open to question. Its deficiencies show up glaringly if we compare it with an ordinary life-insurance policy which is designed, not for the working class, but for the middle and upper classes. First of all, the ordinary policy contains neither of the objectionable clauses: the policy is incontestable after one or two years with no strings attached; and the death benefit is promptly paid to the beneficiary previously chosen by the insured.

An ordinary policy, moreover, is assignable; that is, it can be used as security for an outside loan; the policy-holder simply designates the lender as the person to whom he wants the death claim paid. An industrial policy is not assignable; its holder cannot offer it as security for a loan and no lender would accept it if he did, since neither the insured nor the creditor knows who will receive the death payment. This provision, known as "Invalidity of Assignment," destroys much of the usefulness of the policy during the life of the insured.

The ordinary policy, after its third year, grants a loan privilege to the policy-holder; he may borrow as much cash as the policy contains, leaving the protection in force. Industrials have no loan value at any time; the only way a policy-holder can retrieve any of his cash is to carry the policy for a full ten years, after which he may surrender it for a small part of what he has paid in and cancel the insurance. In this connection it is worth mentioning that most industrials taken out do not survive the first year.

So much for the comparison of provisions. Discriminating against the industrial policy-holder at every turn, the company, as Jack Bradon has stated, "assumes the right to dictate the rights and obligations of both parties to the contract, and the insured is bound by the discretion of the other party to the contract."

Industrial insurance, even if we forget for the moment its outrageously inequitable features, must be condemned for its excessively high cost. Ordinary insurance costs far more than it should; a comparative premium analysis discloses that industrial insurance costs about 33 percent more than ordinary. In fact, the usual comparison is made on the basis of "net cost"—computed by adding the premiums for ten years and deducting the cash surrender value available in the policy at the end of that time. While for technical reasons we do not approve of the net-cost analysis, it is admissible in the present instance. The comparison is startling: *the holder of an industrial whole-life policy has a net-cost eight times higher than that of the holder of an ordinary whole-life policy.* In the wonderland of life insurance, the most extortionate type of protection is reserved for the poorest people.

As a partial extenuation of the industrial rates, it may be said that the inefficient weekly method of collecting premiums entails a greater overhead expense. Assuming the validity of the argument, the fact remains that the blame rests not with the industrial policy-holders but rather with the companies. They have learned that the largest profits come from the existing set-up; nothing, therefore, could induce them to abandon it. The continuance of the business depends upon the well-trained army of sharp, smooth-talking agents who, actuated by the slogan "Keep Up Production," use every means to foist more and more policies on a market already oversold.

In view of the high-pressure way industrial insurance is peddled, in view of its exorbitant cost, it is not surprising that an overwhelming percentage of policies is dropped, or lapsed, shortly after purchase. President Ecker of The Metropolitan Life has testified that 85 percent of the lapses occur in the first year. Eventual lapse or surrender is the inevitable destiny of nineteen out of every twenty policies sold. The direct loss sustained by the working class due to policies which were lapsed during the five-year period, 1928-32, has been conservatively estimated at 200 million dollars and is undoubtedly much greater.

The number of policies terminated for all reasons during 1934 totalled 20 million, aggregating $4,400,000,000 of insurance. Lapse or surrender, involving a complete or virtual loss to policy-holders, accounted for 4.1 billion, or 93 percent of the total terminations. In order to curb the use of astronomical figures, we will take the illustration suggested by Dr. Maurice Taylor. Out of every thousand dollars taken off the books of the insurance companies during 1934, lapse and surrender exacted a toll of $930.

WE ARE now approaching the crucial test of any system of insurance. The only valid reason for the existence of life-insurance is that it presumably insures against the financial loss occasioned by death; the payment of death benefits is its sole object, and unless it efficiently fulfills that object, it fails as a protection device. What percent of every thousand dollars taken off the books in 1934 went to pay death benefits? The answer, according to the most reliable statistics, is *three* percent! In 1934, when billions of dollars were completely lost through lapse, when an additional billion went for surrender, the companies actually paid death claims amounting to only 153 million dollars. The exact figures, taken

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from the Insurance Year Book (for the year ending December 31, 1934), pp. 412-413, are as follows:

Total Terminations	$4,428,062,908
Terminations by Lapse	3,127,573,734
Terminations by Surrender...	983,691,019
Terminations by Death	153,570,202
Note also:	
Salaries and Commissions	$149,456,286

The failure of industrial insurance to insure could not be more absolute.

What can be done about industrial insurance? Those who expect us to propose reforms will be disappointed. The question is not one of lowering rates or of liberalizing policy provisions. We can suggest, of course, that industrial policy-holders who have the means, buy ordinary insurance and drop their present industrial policies, accepting, wherever possible, one of the "non-forfeiture" options. Others will be wise to discontinue their industrial insurance in favor of the policies issued by the International Workers Order, a fraternal organization administered by the working class and offering death- and sick-benefits for remarkably low rates.

Merely to state the possible remedies, however, is to demonstrate their inadequacy. The simple and obvious truth is that the American working class cannot afford to pay for any insurance. We believe it is not essential here to dwell upon the statistics relating to the meagre annual income of the average worker. Only in the light of his insufficiency of income, it must be emphasized, does the viciousness of industrial insurance become truly exposed. Billions of dollars that might have been spent for the necessaries of life, for milk and bread, have run to waste for flimsy insurance. In the impoverishment of the working class, the industrial-insurance companies have done their part.

There is but one practical and humane program. The federal government must be forced to assume the responsibility of insuring the working class. That responsibility should not be confined to the payment of death benefits—just as the insecurity of workers is not limited to the hazard of sudden death. The program must include a well-rounded, comprehensive system of social insurance, no expense of which should be borne by the workers. Inasmuch as all the so-called contributory schemes of social insurance, such as the Wagner-Lewis "Social Security" Bill, must ultimately be paid for by those least able to bear the cost, they can be regarded as little more than a bookkeeping trick. Only a form of social insurance maintained by taxation of the upper-income groups can afford the working class the security it needs. Workers can win such insurance—perhaps including "burial insurance"—by "burying" their representatives in Congress under an avalanche of demands for the one adequate measure — The Workers' Unemployed, Old Age and Social Insurance Act, known all over the country as the Lundeen Bill.

John Reed and Teddy Roosevelt

"Colonel, I Always Knew you Were a Liar"

GRANVILLE HICKS

As described in the chapter published last week, John Reed went to Italy in August, 1914, as the war-correspondent of the Metropolitan Magazine. He spent some time in Paris, London, and Berlin, and in the German trenches in France. Returning to the United States in January, 1915, he sailed once more for Europe in March and spent seven months on the eastern front. His experiences in the Balkans and in Russia are the subject of the chapter that follows this.

Although Reed was in the United States for only two months, he was extremely active. Descriptions of some of his activities, such as his interview with Billy Sunday, have been omitted because they are unrelated to the war. G. H.

WHILE Reed was still in Paris, Lincoln Steffens had written him that it was easier to understand the real issues of the war in New York than in the capitals of the belligerent countries. In Europe, Steffens said, one was too close to the conflict; at any given moment one saw only a small part of the truth, and it was impossible to grasp the situation as a whole. Reed did not underestimate his own confusion, and he believed Steffens might be right. He returned to the United States at the end of January, 1915, with the hope that a few months in this country would clarify his thinking.

He soon learned that Steffens was wrong. His claim that in New York one could see all sides of the struggle, Reed soon realized, was ridiculous. New York was getting almost all of its news through London, and anyone who had been in England could recognize the subtle distortions of the British propagandists. The completeness with which the people of the North Atlantic states accepted the Allied interpretation of the war stunned Reed. His own protests, especially with regard to the atrocity stories, were brushed aside as pro-German prejudice or fantastic nonsense. The American people were reading the adroitly-colored dispatches of such war-correspondents as Philip Gibbs and H. W. Nevinson and the lofty phrases of Wells, Kipling, Galsworthy and Bennett. They saw through England's eyes, and nothing Reed could say made any impression.

As yet only the most bellicose clamored for actual participation, but Reed was conscious that influential sections of the population, especially in the Northeast, were making dangerous assumptions. He foresaw, moreover, that Allied orders for war supplies would inevitably increase, would offset the damage to American business that the blockade had wrought, and would create for American finance and industry a material stake in Allied victory. He saw no adequate resistance to the drift towards war. His Socialist friends understood the economic causes of the conflict, but many of them were chiefly interested in explaining away the collapse of Socialism in the belligerent countries. As for the pacifists, though he agreed with their desire to keep America neutral at all costs, he was a little doubtful about their methods. Their emphasis on the physical horrors of warfare seemed to him dangerously close to hysteria, and he objected to their making the opposition to war a moral issue.

That there was a strong sentiment against war he did not doubt, but no one seemed to know how it could be effectively canalized. Before he had gone to France, he had heard Walter Lippmann discussing plans for The New Republic and he had hoped that the new weekly might provide the right kind of leadership. He returned to find that it had been launched.

The money was provided by Mrs. Willard Straight, and Lippmann was associated in the editorship with Herbert Croly, Walter Weyl, Philip Littell and Francis Hackett. Reed was familiar, of course, with Lippmann's *Preface to Politics,* which had appeared in 1913, and he knew Croly's *Promise of American Life* at least by reputation. He did not fully understand how Lippmann's Socialism could be reconciled with Croly's desire "to unite the Hamiltonian principle of national political responsibility and efficiency with a frank democratic purpose." Croly's Federalism, Weyl's Jeffersonianism and Lippmann's Socialism seemed a strange combination, and yet Reed could see how much

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GAS ATTACK

Etching by Otto Dix—Museum of Modern Art

they all had in common. For one thing they were all realists and rationalists; that is, they emphasized the necessity of accepting the *status quo* as their point of departure, and they had complete confidence in the power of the intellect—more specifically, their intellects—to solve the problems of the social order. Reed had an uncomfortable feeling that realism such as theirs was closely akin to opportunism, and he had a strong sense of the fallibility of human reason, but he was a good deal awed by the erudition, poise and aggressiveness of The New Republic's editors.

He was interested in The New Republic not merely as a phenomenon of American life but as a medium for the expression of ideas that many of his friends had long urged upon him. Not only was Lippmann one of the principal editors; Bob Hallowell was treasurer and Lee Simonson and Alfred Kuttner were frequent contributors. He studied with particular care the editorials on the war, and it seemed to him that they were singularly successful in adding to what he felt to be the universal confusion. They were so superior to ordinary considerations of human suffering and material interests that he could find only a tenuous relation between their assumptions and reality. It seemed reasonable enough to say, "The newer ideal of peace, whether in domestic or foreign policy, has to be actively and intentionally promoted," or, "A nation does not commit the great sin when it fights. It commits the great sin when it fights for a bad cause or when it is afraid to fight for a good cause," or, "Nations do not avoid war by preparing for war, but neither do they avoid war by being unprepared by war." And yet Reed had the sense that all of this elaborate logic could so easily provide a justification for America's entry into the war. The slogan, "This is not our war," might be less subtle, even in a sense less true, but it was a good deal less dangerous.

He was equally puzzled by The New Republic's attitude towards the labor problem. There was a whole series of editorials that maintained with great erudition what Reed knew to be true, namely, that the Socialist Party of America had ceased to be a revolutionary party. When this was said in The Masses, he could heartily applaud, but the way in which The New Republic said the same thing left him bewildered and irritated. There was such an air of condescension: "Its errors are less of the heart than of the head, and its enthusiasm, its self-sacrifice and its occasional spurts of courage more than compensate for its obstinacy in misrepresentation and for a certain mendacity born of fanaticism. The Socialist Party offers an opportunity to hundreds of little groups all over the country to educate themselves in public meeting if not in public affairs." Why Croly and Lippmann should feel so superior to the Socialists, weak as the Party was, Reed could not see. When he looked for some positive statement of The New Republic's remedy for the inefficiency, injustice and cruelty of American industrialism, he could find nothing but vague talk about industrial democracy. There is always violence in a strike, the editors would observe; it is never possible to decide who is at fault; the only solution is to eliminate the causes of strife by setting up machinery for the peaceful solution of difficulties. John Reed, who was not a profound student of economics, but who had, after all, been in jail in Paterson and seeen the ruins of the Ludlow tent colony, would wonder precisely what sort of machinery would serve the purpose. "We do not expect," the editors reasonably assured him, "to jump straight from the present absolution into a cooperative democracy. Industry will have to pass through the intermediate steps, through limited monarchy, through representative government, before self-government is possible."

It did not lessen Reed's bewilderment and irritation to find, in one of the first issues of The New Republic, an article by Walter Lippmann called "Legendary John Reed." Reed had mildly satirized Lippmann in his long poem, "A Day in Bohemia," and the article was an appropriate enough response, defining the difference between them from Lippmann's point of view as the poem had defined it from Reed's. Lippmann said a number of complimentary things, and there

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was no doubt that the intention of the piece was friendly. But there was an undertone of condescension that Reed resented. Lippmann, the precocious author of *Preface to Politics* and *Drift and Mastery,* made a good deal of the play-boy in Reed: "I can't think of a form of disaster which John Reed hasn't tried and enjoyed. He has half-spilled himself into commercialism, had his head turned by flattery, tried to act like a cynical war-correspondent, posed as a figure out of Ibsen." It was true, but Reed could not be blamed for feeling it was not the whole truth. And he was a little annoyed by the way Lippmann, evidently thinking of himself as the true revolutionary, poked fun at Reed as a pseudo-revolutionary: "For a few weeks Reed tried to take The Masses' view of life. He assumed that all capitalists were fat, bald and unctuous, that Victor Berger and the Socialist Party and Samuel Gompers and the trade unions are a fraud on labor. He made an effort to believe that the working class is not composed of miners, plumbers and working men generally, but is a fine, statuesque giant who stands on a high hill facing the sun. He wrote stories about the night court and plays about ladies in kimonos. He talked with intelligent tolerance about dynamite, and thought he saw an intimate connection between the cubists and the I.W.W. He even read a few pages of Bergson." It was true, of course, that Lippmann knew ten times as much about Marx as he did, but Reed could not be blamed for wondering why a couple of erudite books and a few weeks as secretary to Socialist Mayor Lunn of Schenectady entitled Walter Lippmann to set himself up as a model revolutionary. He had called Lippmann "our all-unchallenged chief," and he meant it, but the article sounded as if Lippmann thought of himself as a stern father and Reed as a spoiled child; "At times when he seemed to be rushing himself and others into trouble, when his ideas were especially befuddled, I have tried to argue with him. But all laborious elucidation he greets with pained boredom." After all, they were both considerably under thirty.

REED was too busy to dwell long on the Lippmann incident. His experiences on the western front had given him material for two short stories, one of which he sent to The Metropolitan, the other to The Masses. The Metropolitan story, "The Barber of Lille," had been suggested by his observations of the oppressed and deeply bitter citizenry of German France. Out of a casual conversation with a barber, he fashioned a melodramatic tale of the murder of a German officer. The wife, half in love with the German, hysterically spurs her husband on to the deed, telling him the murder will be the signal for the people of Lille to rise. It would be pure melodrama if the barber's old father were not given the last words: "Do you think the city will rise? Don't you know that the grocer, and the tobacconist, and the cafetier, and the baker are living off the Germans? Don't you know that the town is sold? Can't you understand that the Germans buy and pay money?"

As so often, The Masses got the better work. "Daughter of the Revolution" grew out of one of the lonely nights in Paris, a night spent in a cafe with two or three girls of the street. It was one of these girls—he called her Marcelle—who was the daughter of the revolution. Her grandfather had been shot in the Commune; her father and brother had led strikes and been beaten by the police. She was half-proud, half-ashamed of her revolutionary heritage. She, too, had wanted liberty, but liberty to enjoy at once the good things life offered. So she became a prostitute. "It was not vice that had twisted her," Reed commented, "but the intolerable degradation of the human spirit by the masters of the earth, the terrible punishment of those who thirst for liberty." In Reed's eyes, she, too, though she did not know it and either thought of herself as a sinner and a renegade or thought of her father and brother as narrow fools, was a revolutionary.

He was interested not only in short stories but also in plays. The Washington Square Players were presenting *Moondown* on their second bill, together with Andreyev's *Love of One's Neighbor,* Phillip Moeller's *Two Blind Beggars and One Less Blind* and Brock Pemberton's *My Lady's Honor.* The success of the little play encouraged him to take out and revise *Enter Dibble.* He had probably begun this three-act play as early as 1913, but he had never been satisfied with it, and had from time to time to revise it. When he finished his revision in February, 1915, H. J. Whigham of The Metropolitan sent it to Granville Barker. Barker said it was extremely alive but derivative and technically weak. Later Reed tried other producers, but the play was never staged and never published.

Enter Dibble, in spite of its weaknesses, was, as Barker said, alive. The revolutionary comedy of ideas was not the best possible form for John Reed to attempt, but the artificiality of the medium and its uncongeniality could not completely conceal the vitality of the man. Reed's whole indictment of the bourgeoisie centered in their stifling of life. He wanted freedom and beauty—but not merely for himself. His own generous passions escaped into the play. The dialogue was mostly feeble in its groping after Shavian wit, but it had moments of fire. Reed was always saying the same thing, even in the mawkishness of *Moondown;* life can be infinitely rich, infinitely precious and the enemies of life will have to be destroyed.

"Reed has no detachment," Lippmann had written, "and is proud of it, I think. By temperament he is not a professional writer or reporter. He is a person who enjoys himself. Revolution, literature, poetry, they are only things which hold him at times, incidents merely of his living." It was true. What Lippmann did not understand was how resolutely Reed held on to his belief in the possibilities of life, the significance of living, and how surely this belief was growing into a social philosophy. Living itself was all-important; nothing could be tolerated, within oneself or in society, that stood in the way.

The apparently reckless things that Reed did were not the product of meaningless whims; they were the expression of deep impulses. If he risked his life with Ia Tropa in Mexico or in the German trenches, it was because he knew the limitations of the terms on which life was worth living; he had to test his own courage before he would dare to oppose war. Even the silly pranks he engaged in were not wholly pointless; if he had happened to be a French poet, instead of an American, he would have thought of them as significant gestures. They were protests against stupidity, narrowness, sterility; they were manifestations, deeds proclaiming the glory of freedom.

THIS is not to say, of course, that Reed scorned bread and butter and, at the moment, that meant working for The Metropolitan. The magazine was still engaged in its strategic retreat. It boasted of the fact that, though it had endorsed socialism, it was "almost the only periodical in America that during the last two years of business depression, and in spite of the war, has constantly increased its advertising revenue." This, H. J. Whigham editorially stated, was a tribute to "the progressive character of the national advertiser" and "an evidence of the trend of the times." It was also, he added, an indication of the broadening of socialism. "Two and a half years ago the Socialist Party was still dominated in part by men of the Haywood type. The class war was the essence of the political faith and direct action was freely advocated against political methods. . . . Today the Socialist Party has tacitly removed the class war as a test of faith. . . . The Socialist Party in America has finally and definitely cut loose from the advocates of brute force, and has thereby taken its place as a great civilizing and constructive body. . . . Socialism is not only a great and growing force against war between nations, but, what is even more important, it is becoming the main bulwark against war between class and class." It was true that Hillquit was still contributing a monthly article to The Metropolitan, but his articles were chiefly devoted to exonerating the Socialist Parties of Europe for their capitulation to militarism and to demonstrating that the war, because the Socialists had predicted it, was really a triumph of socialism. Lippmann was also writing each month, offering constructive plans for a controlled imperialism and what he called democracy in industry. But even the radicalism of such practical men

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as Hillquit and Lippmann seemed to Mr. Whigham to need a counter-balance, and with the issue of February, 1915, Theodore Roosevelt became a regular contributor.

Roosevelt thundered away against President Wilson. He listed the Americans killed in Mexico, and attacked those who opposed intervention: "The rape of women, the murder of men and the cruel treatment of little children leave their tepid souls unstirred. Insult to the American flag, nameless infamies on American women, cause them not one single pulse of emotion." "To defend Villa," he cried, "as representing freedom and justice and democracy in the sense that the words are used in speaking of civilized nations is literally like defending an old-time Apache chief on the same grounds. The sincerity of such a defense can escape question only if the defender is admitted to be entirely ignorant of all concerning which he speaks." He clamored for preparedness, calling for a regular army of at least two hundred thousand men, so that the United States could take over at a moment's notice the duty of policing Mexico.

Roosevelt, his father's idol, became, for John Reed, the epitome of all that he hated in the New York he had discovered on his return from the western front. Since they frequently met in The Metropolitan office, it was inevitable that they should quarrel. Reed took particular satisfaction in praising Villa in Roosevelt's presence. "Villa is a murderer and a bigamist," Roosevelt said. Reed assumed his most superior manner. "Well, I believe in bigamy," he said. Roosevelt thrust out his hand: "I am glad, John Reed, to find you believe in something. It is very necessary for a young man to believe in something."

But sometimes their meetings did not end good-humoredly. On one occasion Roosevelt was telling a group how he had ordered a soldier to be shot in the Spanish-American War. Reed broke in: "Why, Colonel, I always knew you were a murderer." And they went at it, each shouting at the other, their voices growing shriller and shriller, until Whigham and Hovey separated them.

ROOSEVELT'S appointment to the staff of The Metropolitan was an even clearer indication than Whigham's editorials of what was happening, but Reed realized that no other magazine that offered a comparable salary would be more congenial or give him more freedom.

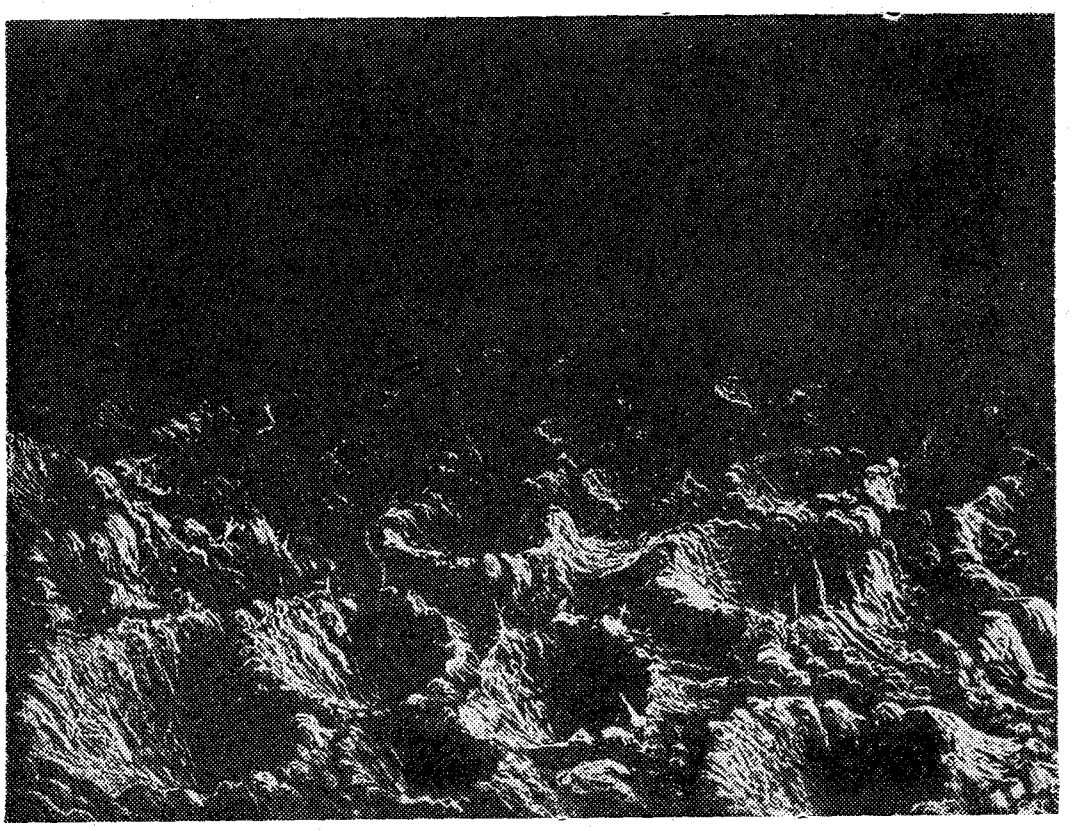
Hovey wanted him to go back to France, but he had been barred from that country. On February 27, Robert Dunn had published in The New York Post an account of their night in the German trenches. As they emerged from the dugout, Lieutenant Riegel, he said, took a Mauser from one of the soldiers. "The next moment it was in Reed's hands, and with the muzzle pointing through the eyehole atop the bank, he was getting a bead on the low, jagged crest of mud across the short and hellish space. Be it on our heads, we did it, both fired twice, turn and turn about, wicked, full-fledged franc-tireurs. . . . That Reed should have done so, with his scorn of force and soldiering, is sufficient, if sophistical, excuse for me."

There had been tremendous protest—far greater, certainly, than would have arisen if the guns had been pointed in the other direction. President Hibben of Princeton wrote: "I wish to express my feeling of indignation and of protest against this cold-blooded and inhuman proceeding." Some of the papers published editorials. Richard Harding Davis denounced Reed and had to be reminded of certain exploits of his own. More important, the French government banned both Reed and Dunn from France.

Boardman Robinson, a famous artist, who had been for some years on the staff of The Tribune and had occasionally contributed to The Masses, was supposed to accompany Reed to France, and it was suggested that they go together to see Ambassador Jusserand in Washington. Jusserand was friendly, and suggested that a letter from Roosevelt might move the French government. They hurried back to New York and explained what had happened. Roosevelt dictated his letter in their presence. It ended, "If I were Marshal Joffre and Reed fell into my hands, I should have him court-martialed and shot."

Since there was no chance of going to the western front, it was decided that they should go to the Balkans and Russia. They were innoculated for typhoid and cholera, and passage was booked for March 20. In the meantime, Reed had a series of lecture engagements. On March 5, he spoke at Tremont Temple in Boston. The audience was pro-Ally and was frankly incredulous when he denied the atrocity stories and indignant when he maintained that England was equally guilty with Germany. The next night he attended a Lampoon dinner in Cambridge and found most of the undergraduates as settled in their prejudices as his Boston listeners had been. What he had feared was happening. Steffens might talk of the opportunities in America for an impartial analysis of the issues of war, but Reed could see only that six months of British propaganda had had its effect.

He wrote for The Masses an article called "The Worst Thing in Europe." It was not a very carefully considered article, but there was tremendous passion in it. Reed began by describing the docility of the men in the French and German armies, and attributed it to the fact that they had been disciplined by military training. The equal docility of the English soldier he blamed on the British caste system: men who know their place become obedient soldiers. "I hate soldiers," he wrote. "I hate to see a man with a bayonet fixed on his rifle, who can order me off the street. I hate to belong to an organization that is proud of obeying a caste of superior beings, that is proud of killing free ideas, so that it may the more efficiently kill human beings in cold blood. They will tell you that a conscript army is democratic, because everybody has to serve; but they won't tell you that military service plants in your body the germ of blind obedience, of blind irresponsibility, that it produces one class of commanders in your state and your industries, and accustoms you to do what they tell you even in time of peace." "They are talking now," he concluded, "about building up an immense standing army. . . . I, for one, refuse to join."



SHELL HOLES

Etching by Otto Dix—Museum of Modern Art

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THE DEMAGOG

Gus Peck

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Correspondence

A Plea from Commonwealth

To The New Masses:

This *Letter From America* has to travel down from the Ozarks, through the stubble of Arkansas sugar cane and plowed-under cotton fields, across Tom Sawyer's river and on for two nights and a day to reach you.

It is really a collective letter, some fifty letters in one, from a cross-section of young workers' America gathered here at Commonwealth, a non-factional labor school that has been training union and farm organizers, young revolutionary writers and journalists, and leaders of youth groups for the past twelve years. This quarter there is Walt, a Philadelphia mill worker's boy who has been on the road, in C.C.C. camps and active in unemployed councils; Francis, a Wisconsin logger who read about Debs by firelight and made up his mind to do something with his life besides fell trees; Louise, a machinist's daughter who worked in small-town clothing and toy factories and first heard about Socialism at a church conference; Morris, a Chicago printer whose union took an active interest in his coming here; Al, from the Louisiana lowlands, headed for a C.C.C. camp when a lucky break sent him to Commonwealth instead; Max, a cub reporter who threw up his job to go with labor; farm boys and girls, truckdrivers, young organizers and many others.

Next quarter we are expecting some Arkansas sharecroppers and Kentucky union miners as students—and here we come to the immediate reason for this letter. Arkansas croppers who have built them a union 15,000 strong, and just won a cotton pickers' strike against the plantation owners, now want to send the best of their number to school. Down here, along the Mississippi, where cotton fields and mine patches are heavy with thoughts and misery, this means something; down here where the life of a "nigger" or "Damn inciter of labor" is worth no more than a quick load of buck shot.

But the croppers and their union have no funds, and the College is almost as dirt poor. True, we have some invaluable possessions here at Commonwealth: the famous Joe Jones murals depicting southern labor's struggles, a Museum of Social Change that offers a graphic record of capitalist barbarism and decline; and a genuine united front and spirit of collective labor that has kept the school going through all these depression years. But of silver and gold we have little.

Both students and teachers contribute enough labor to keep the school farm, communal kitchen and other affairs going; and teachers receive no salary, only maintenance (read: overalls and grub). In this way, school upkeep has been reduced to a bare minimum, with the cost to a student of fifty dollars a quarter.

But where is a cropper to get this sum? Also, there is the question of his wife and kids who still have to eat. (Croppers marry young.) Commonwealth must raise scholarships. The croppers' Southern Tenant Farmer's Union is counting on this, and has already selected its students.

Today, as I write this, a letter smuggled out of a Kentucky jail by a union miner comes to the College, saying that the Harlan miners have three members they want to send us by Christmas, and can't we furnish them scholarships? "We need training bad."

Of course, we must. That is why we are writing you, so that you can help an Arkansas cropper, Kentucky miner and Carolina mill worker to train for a time in a workers' college, then return to his post better equipped to carry on his important organizing work.

Send a scholarship if you can, or have your organization do so. If this isn't possible, send whatever you are able toward a scholarship to the college treasurer, Charlotte Moskowitz, Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas. And be sure that your funds could not be more productively placed at this moment than right here.

What our American movement needs right now above everything else, is a corps of young, native, reliable and trained labor organizers. Commonwealth happens to be strategically placed for training the working youth of the South and Middle West.

This letter brings the warm greetings of our students and faculty. Every week there is something of a rush to the library for the latest issue of campus' most popular magazine.

Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark.

Myra Page.

They Have Not Learned

To The New Masses:

"Yes, Ma'am!" said the F.E.R.A. director, emphatically when I asked him if he expected to take the workers off the Keys before the hurricane yesterday. Again there was ample warning, cars were turned back, the Red Cross came through with transportation to the Mainland for all residents who wished to leave, busses enough to take every F.E.R.A. worker to safety were there, and yet—*five truckloads of Negroes were abandoned.*

They were left on the unprotected islands with no shelter though another hurricane like the last one took the lives of 800 veterans.

Fortunately, the fury of the storm broke farther north and these deserted F.E.R.A. workers were not sacrificed, but it was good fortune they have to thank and not the consideration of the F.E.R.A. director.

Radio advice warned all to prepare for possible danger from Palm Beach to Key West, because it could not be determined exactly at what point the hurricane would reach the coast. Everyone prepared for it, seeking shelter in the strongest buildings in each town, each with his bottle of corn to get drunk to keep from getting hysterical. Only the poorest people, most of these Negroes, could find no better shelter than their flimsy wooden shacks that crunch like match boxes in the teeth of the gale.

Below Islamorada Key where the F.E.R.A. workers are repairing the damage caused two months ago by the hurricane there are no buildings better than the wooden barracks where huddled the 800 victims of the "mistake"; shreds of shirts, mattresses, and bits of personal effects are still clinging to the remnants of vegetation for a distance of several miles. Hundreds of workers have spent all this time cleaning up the mess, repairing the road, and are still finding the bodies left from the unnecessary slaughter that became a national scandal.

Yet all this was not enough to ensure the safe evacuation of five truckloads of Negro F.E.R.A. workers, who are forced to labor in this danger spot for a mere subsistence. Over N.B.C. via W.I.O.D. you heard these reassuring words:

"Profiting by the disastrous experience of the Labor Day hurricane on the Florida Keys, south of Miami, relief workers, still clearing the debris of the early September storm, that took a toll of 500 lives, were brought out of the danger area before today's hurricane struck."

Yet brief lines in The Miami Times report:

"Five truckloads of Negroes working on the Keys were reported missing early last night, but later were accounted for, according to F.E.R.A. supervisors. The Negroes were located south of Tavernier and reached Miami shortly after midnight."

The storm reached its height in Miami between one and three o'clock; by four Homestead had it and the outer rim winds swept the Keys between then and six o'clock, yet the five truckloads were not even reported missing until evening when it was definitely known that the hurricane had passed into the interior.

The humorous sidelights on the storm report with glee the drunken gaiety of the wealthy playboys who good-humoredly crowded into the hurricane-proof big hotels, and have nothing more to say of the Negro section of town than to poke fun at the fearful prayers of those who are condemned to their one-room shacks that are death traps even in the outer rim of the storm.

No wonder one gets a fearful urge to destroy heartlessly people who while safe, think fear is funny, and who report F.E.R.A. workers safely evacuated—except five truckloads of Negro workers.

Key Largo, Fla. Egan Vonde.

Letters in Brief

The League of American Writers announces the publication, early in 1936, of Decision, a quarterly magazine covering all vital aspects of American culture and open to all American writers. The magazine, to contain about 96 pages, will print fiction, poetry, criticism and informative articles summing up political and cultural trends. Waldo Frank is chairman of the League.

"Where did you find Martin Russak's 'The Women's Battalion'?" writes Washington Cook. "In literary style it is a grand old Nineteenth Century short story, but somewhere Russak got it set on fire. I am a very decorous person not at all given to demonstrations, but I was sadly tempted to go out under the Third Avenue L and start a parade of my own." "The Women's Battalion," is a chapter from Russak's novel, *Weaver's Son,* which was second choice of the judges in the New Masses—John Day Prize Novel Contest.

Michael Pell, of the American Friends of the Chinese People, informs us that all copies of the September issue of China Today were seized by the Yokohama police. The issue had another of William Gropper's cartoons on the Emperor of Japan.

Dr. Virgil MacMickle, of Portland, Ore., who liked Walter Wilson's article on Gen. Smedley Butler, writes, "I've been waiting for you to sound off for the last year." Dr. MacMickle believes we are going to get many letters suggesting Gen. Butler as the nominee for president on a Labor Party ticket.

A reader sends us a clipping from Variety, a Paris dispatch stating: "Croix de Feu movement, nearest thing to fascism in France, got a free gift of nine reels of film about its activities when Dick de Rochemont, European manager of *March of Time,* turned over to Colonel de la Rocque, head of the movement, a copy of what *Time* had shot for its recent newsreel on France."

A group of artists who for several months have been aiding the longshoremen in their efforts to organize have projected a Waterfront Art Show, to be held at 163 Bleecker Street, beginning December 14.

They are inviting other artists to come to the waterfront, make drawings or paintings or sculpture, and exhibit them at the show. Twenty-five percent of the sale price of the pictures will go to help on the waterfront. Artists wishing to give their active support can learn details at the Artists Union and John Reed School, or may communicate with H. Albertine, 172 Thompson Street, New York.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Better Than "Call Home the Heart"

A STONE CAME ROLLING, by Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green and Co. $2.50. (Book Union Choice for December.)

MORE than thirty years ago, Olive Tilford Dargan, who now writes under the name of Fielding Burke, published her first book, a collection of plays in verse. Other books, both of plays and lyrics, appeared during the next two decades and she became known as a poet with a strong love of natural beauty. From such of her verse as I have read, I gather that she was always a humanitarian, but certainly the reader was less conscious of her social sympathies than of her intense and perhaps mystical preoccupation with nature.

Then, three years ago, *Call Home the Heart* was published. In its early chapters it showed a rare ability to portray the beauty of the Carolina mountains and what seemed to be a thorough understanding of their people. But the novel did not fall into the mistake that has vitiated so much regional literature: it did not try to set forth the dead past as if it were the living present. On the contrary, it bravely carried its characters from the mountains to the industrial towns of the South, and showed how new forces were creating new problems. It did more than that: it selected types of experience that indicated how these problems could be solved. The humanitarianism of the early work had grown into revolutionary passion.

Call Home the Heart was a sincere and moving novel, but its faults were obvious. The description of its industrial struggle seemed incidental, an episode between the heroine's departure from the mountains and her return. That she should was natural enough, but the emphasis was unfortunate. Moreover, the impression that the strike was only of secondary importance was heightened by the fact that the author was unmistakably much more at home in describing the mountains than she was in describing industrial conditions and labor organizations. No one could doubt the genuineness of Fielding Burke's revolutionary sympathies, but they were not given integrated expression in the book.

Whatever its faults, *Call Home the Heart* was, in its own right, a remarkable novel, and it was even more remarkable in the light of its author's previous work. It is, then, as extraordinary as it is pleasant to report that *A Stone Came Rolling* is a much better book than *Call Home the Heart,* and is strong precisely where its predecessor was weak. Not only is the struggle of labor an integral part of the book; it is handled with knowledge and insight. Fielding Burke understands the economic problems of southern industry, the difficulties that face organized labor and the tactics that are being evolved to meet those difficulties. From this point of view, *A Stone Came Rolling* is a challenge to the revolutionary novelists who have allowed themselves to be beaten by ignorance: Fielding Burke has shown that writers can learn.

The novel is not, of course, a strike handbook, but simply the story of a group of southern people, especially Ishma Hensley, the heroine of *Call Home the Heart,* her husband Britt, and Bly Emberson and his family. The strike that takes place in Dunmow is a crucial event in their lives and, therefore, Fielding Burke makes it her business to describe the strike intelligently. But she is primarily interested in the characters, as she should be, and she handles them beautifully. Britt, who was a little shadowy in *Call Home the Heart,* emerges very clearly in this novel and shares the honors with Ishma. Bly Emberson, a manufacturer who wants to be good and is beaten by the system, is a character worthy of a place beside them. And the whole picture of life in Dunmow is firm and well-rounded. One of the incidental weaknesses of the first novel was the unconvincing portrayal of the upper class; here even the most reactionary employers are real persons.

The great quality that Fielding Burke has in both her novels is warmth, and it is a quality that is too often lacking in revolutionary fiction. One never feels for a moment that she is outside the struggle she portrays; she is in it, heart and soul. The reader cannot help but respond to her admiration for Ishma, her tenderness towards Britt, her respect for Bly Emberson. These are real persons to her, and she makes them real to us, and makes us feel about them as she feels. Her dislikes are as strong as her loyalties: she understands Verna Emberson but detests her; she shudders at the stinking hypocrisy of most of the clergymen; she is grieved and angry at the treason of some of the workers. And her revolutionary hope is real, too; one feels it as a living, irresistible force in her life.

It is perhaps only in the matter of language that Fielding Burke betrays the fact that her literary powers developed in an earlier day than ours. Her appreciation of natural beauty is certainly an asset and one is glad that she is not, like some of our writers, ashamed to express the emotion that a lovely scene arouses in her. But her imagery sometimes seems too purely romantic, and in describing emotional crises—the death of Britt, for example—she occasionally comes to the very edge of the gulf of sentimentality. This is a minor criticism, though justice requires that it be recorded. Its chief significance is that it reminds us of the Olive Tilford Dargan who had written for twenty-five years before Fielding Burke appeared. It reminds us that Fielding Burke has come by a more difficult path than most of our young writers have had to follow, and the fact that she belongs, as she indubitably does, with men and women who were not born when her first book was published is a tribute to the creative force of the revolutionary movement, to the power of the poetic imagination and to Fielding Burke.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

May It Please the Court

HISTORIC OPINIONS OF THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT: Selected With a Preface and Introductory Notes by Ambrose Doskow. The Vanguard Press. $4.50.

THE belief that God made man in his own image is giving way before scientific investigation; today it is pretty generally acknowledged that men fashion gods in their own likeness. In time, idolatrous Constitution-worship will vanish and we will understand that the constitution has been molded to fit socio-economic circumstances. For, despite pretense, that document did not spring full-blown from the minds of the Founding Fathers; it was born out of a series of practical compromises in a convention of competing property-holders and it has grown in scope and meaning through amendments and court decisions, with later generations of property-holders exercising the dominant voice in shaping changes and interpretations.

Neither the property-holders who wrote the original document nor those who have shaped its growth were permitted to do their work unchallenged. Dissident elements forced the inclusion of the first ten amendments before they would agree to ratification and their successors have made their influence felt: Andrew Jackson's frontiersmen, Abolitionists, Populists, Socialists, Muckrakers and, more lately, the forces of organized labor. The character of property has changed too since 1787; it has passed through successive stages of individual holdings, simple corporations, monopoly and finally to that intricate, almost mysterious, maze of wealth-holding that we call finance capitalism. Those changes have been reflected in court decisions and a sensitive historian might even trace America's development through a close study

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of the constitution and the interpretative rulings of the United States Supreme Court.

Theoreticians make a great show of tracing back to the English Common Law the right of the Supreme Court to determine the constitutionality of congressional legislation. But that is only legal pettifogging; it is easy to prove that there is no warrant in Anglo-Saxon law for that exercise of power. The Supreme Court's assumption of authority grew out of far more tangible considerations. It happens that the judiciary is less responsive to popular will than the legislative and administrative branches of our government. Unpopular presidents and recalcitrant lawmakers can be defeated at the polls but Supreme Court justices are appointed for life—they can override public sentiment with some impunity. It is significant that the Union League recently called pointed attention to the life terms of the justices and excused its distrust of Congress on the ground that "members are elected for comparatively short terms and . . . on many occasions have bowed to what they considered the will of the majority." For reasons of their own, legislators and presidents have connived at the Court's usurpation of power; it offers an opportunity to pass the buck when an upsurge of popular sentiment forces the passage of a law to which the dominant group is hostile.

Once it had assumed the right to declare laws unconstitutional, the Supreme Court had in its possession the power to nullify any measure which the justices chose to frown upon. It has chosen to exercise that right so often that even the suggestion that it has no such right is labeled radical, even Communistic. Of course, apologists for the Court never suggest that its power is exercised to defeat popular will; they pretend that it is used to defend ancient rights and liberties and scare-mongers are forever drawing doleful pictures of what would happen if legislators had the right to determine constitutionality.

A survey of decisions collected in this volume will convince the reader that the Court's privilege of vetoing legislation has been used far more for the protection of property than for the preservation of liberties. Marbury vs. Madison, Mr. Doskow's first case is in point, as the lawyers say. Angered by the sedition legislation of the John Adams administration, the voters turned the Federalists out and elected Thomas Jefferson and his Democrats. Reform was in the air and Federalists used the lameduck Congress to pass laws to preserve control of the judiciary. The case that arose to test one of these laws was unimportant but Chief Justice John Marshall, a Federalist, seized the occasion to advance a qualified decision that the Court had the right to declare legislation void when, in its opinion, a law violated the constitution, a decision arrived at only through an express disregard of procedural rules.

The way had been opened and Marshall gradually extended the doctrine. In the Dartmouth College case he brushed aside the will of the New Hampshire legislature to hold that the constitution forbids the impairment of contractual obligations. He disregarded public opinion again when he laid the basis for the national banking system in McCullough vs. Maryland.

The capstone of this arrogant seizure of power came in the Dred Scott case. In that case the Court gave its blessings to slavery only by overturning a law that had been in force for years: the Missouri Compromise. It took the Civil War to abrogate a decision in which the force of property interest was crystal clear: five of the judges who sat on the case were slaveholders, two were southern sympathizers. The law was held invalid by a vote of seven to two. Even more revealing is the fact that the pro-slavery justices violated court rules to communicate their decision in advance to pro-slavery President James Buchanan.

There is no room to review all of the decisions in this book but the cases that arose under the Fourteenth Amendment deserve mention. The amendment was ratified under the belief that it protected rights of Negroes and Congress passed a series of laws known as the Civil Rights Acts penalizing discrimination. The Court promptly held the laws unconstitutional. But the amendment was quickly utilized by corporations to thwart attempts at regulation; today it is a bulwark against public ownership.

The Court has not scrupled to use its power to defeat other popular reforms; it bowed to corporation influence in the income tax cases, it fashioned the trust-busting Clayton Act into a weapon against organized labor and with consummate irony it has forestalled all attempts to abolish child labor and regulate working hours by keeping up the fiction that it is preserving individual liberties.

Everybody knows that the Supreme Court has never worked too smoothly. Its history is studded with dissents and reversals of former rulings. These dissents and reversals have reflected both the pressure of public opinion and cleavages in the ranks of supporters of capitalism. For example, the N.R.A. was held unconstitutional by a unanimous vote, a unanimity achieved because the conservatives, like Justices Butler and McReynolds, oppose all regulation of business and because liberals, like Justices Brandeis and Stone, were moved by fear that N.R.A. was crushing the small business man for whom they speak.

Put in this bald fashion it may appear that the Supreme Court is all-powerful and that only a complete overturn of government will suffice to curb its often vicious defense of property rights. It is necessary to emphasize the fact that the justices are only men wearing black robes, sometimes moved a little by humanitarian considerations, and that they, consciously or unconsciously, temper their decisions to the time.

In a certain sense the early strengthening of property rights by the Court was progressive because it gave capitalism the room to develop. But capitalism has been outgrown and every move to strengthen it now is made at the expense of the workers and middle-class folk. The tightening of class lines is making the Supreme Court more and more an arena for the struggle between the forces of progress and of reaction. Workers and their allies cannot hope to win final victories in a Court which is an integral part of an outgrown system. But they must take to heart the profound observation of Mr. Dooley: "The flag may not follow the Constitution but the Supreme Court follows the election returns."

LOREN MILLER.

Capitalism's Ally

I BREAK STRIKES, The Technique of Pearl L. Bergoff, by Edward Levinson. Robert M. McBride and Co. $2.50.

IN AMERICA, Boris Pilnyak once wrote, everything is O. K. A man breaks a leg, a bill is paid, the wife walks out on him—it's all O. K. And so is Pearl Bergoff, strikebreaker extraordinary, O. K. with those that rule America; not a particularly pleasant fellow to be sure, but O. K. You've got to have him, like you've got to have straw bosses, advertising copy writers and aldermen who let public contracts. As counsel for Bergoff explained so lucidly at a hearing attended by your reviewer and the author:

> If the strikebreaking business is a nefarious business, then it is nefarious for business and industry to hire strikebreakers. Some of the largest corporations in the country have called on my client; and they still call on him for his services.

It is Bergoff's peculiar type of "services" to the social order that Levinson traces with painstaking thoroughness, from the turn of the century when the Red Demon was employed as a "spotter" by the Brooklyn Heights Railroad to his currently parlous state. Trailing Bergoff one gets revealing flashes of the stormy development of the American labor movement. McKees Rocks; Bayonne; St. Louis and the Anti-Horse Thieves Association that ran the strikebreakers out of town; Ludlow; West Virginia; the national textile strike of 1934. New York's bitter subway and elevated strikes. Sober, calculating Christian gentlemen at the head of powerful concerns toss millions into the fight to smash down labor and Bergoff finds easy pickings as corporation after corporation calls upon Bergoff for "his services."

Some day in a socialist America children will study the history of our period. A special course, Capitalist Villainy, will undoubtedly be given. Somewhere in that study there

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should be room for Pearl L. Bergoff and the Bergoff Service Bureau. The students of that day will read—and probably credit to the fancy of the historian—that in the twentieth century when men and women went on strike their places were taken by strikebreakers, protected by armed guards. *I Break Strikes* will explain the technique and the special phraseology that grew up. "Finks" were professional strikebreakers, they will learn, while "nobles" were tough, brawny gentlemen, usually with long criminal records who knew how to use gun and blackjack with rare skill, who acted as guards. When a strike would break out, Bergoff would receive the contract to force the striking men and women back to work. Strikebreakers would man, after a fashion, the idle machines; stoolpigeons and agents provocateurs would go among the strikers; the armed guards would do a little clubbing and shooting. Bergoff would buy real estate on the profits.

A text-book for the children of the future, *I Break Strikes* has its greatest validity for the sons of the present engaged in the battle against the forces of reaction. For labor organizers, for all men and women actively occupied with the struggle to better living conditions here and now, Levinson's book is invaluable. It should be quoted at a thousand union meetings and in labor papers from coast to coast. Thorough, well-documented, it easily ranks as the best in the field. As a case study of our best known contemporary rat, *I Break Strikes* has no peer.

One wishes for the sake of those middle-class readers who have never had direct contact with the labor movement that Levinson had examined the social relationship between a Bergoff and the capitalist system of which he is so evidently an organic part. This thesis, constantly implied and an assumption in the mind of the informed reader, should have been, in this reviewer's opinion, explicit. The Bergoffs are the banditti of our age who serve the lords on the hill and were called into existence only because they were needed by the masters. Such a generalization, a theorizing, if you will, flowing inevitably from the mass of unimpeachable facts gathered by Levinson, should have been set forth. It would have been no intrusion at all.

But we don't want to seem to be carping. Our fundamental impression remains: Edward Levinson has done a distinct service to the American labor movement.

S. W. Gerson.

The Moral Equivalent

MEN AND MOUNTAINS, MAN'S VICTORY OVER NATURE, by M. Ilin. Translated by Beatrice Kinkead with illustrations in color and 116 in the text by N. Lapshin. J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia. $2.50.

WHILE Mussolini with a magnanimous gesture reconciles himself to the sacrifice of 100,000 other Italian's lives; while the Nazis degrade the word pacifist into a term of loathing; while elsewhere under capitalism old rationalizations for war are repolished and new ones are invented to make death by crushing, ripping, dismemberment, suffocation, drowning, poisoning, disease, bayonets and bullets once more appear to be a privilege to the masses—over in the Soviet Union William James' "moral equivalent for war" seems near to realization.

Only it requires a premise that will hardly be acceptable to certain nature lovers and to certain austere and high-minded belittlers of humanity.

To those worshippers of the primitive status quo to whom nature is perfect as is, who ignore the fact that nature herself is constantly doing over her face, this equivalent may in fact be impious and immoral.

To those Brahmin let-livers who forbear from carefree steps lest they crush an ant, or from scratching themselves lest they inconvenience a flea, to whom a drop of iodine causes anguish as the lives of a few million bacteria are blotted out, to them this moral equivalent may seem catastrophic.

It presupposes the supremacy of man over all other forms of life on earth; it confidently puts the science of genetics and kindred sciences in his hands as weapons with which to enforce that supremacy. It presumes his ultimate domination over nature which it condemns as disorderly, as still too close to the chaos from which it was summoned, and it proposes the mobilization of mankind's two billion heads and four billion hands to achieve this domination.

Philosophers reaching for a superhuman view may argue that there is no abstract, ethical justification for man to seek this domination. The answer is that mankind takes that right in its own interest. It does not pretend to do so in the interest of lions, mosquitoes or streptococci. Some entomologists may object that insects have the same ambition. The answer is that the war is on.

Out of the triumphant advance into Socialism in the Soviet Union the new war has emerged, the war upon nature. Its objective is to annex those kingdoms of desolation, the deserts, and to extend the Empire of Socialist man into the polar regions, higher into the air, deeper under the crust of the earth, deeper into the ocean. It plans to splice and wind and unwind rivers like ropes, to join oceans, to command the winds, to gather and discharge the clouds. It plans to alter the plant population of earth, forcing migrations of grains, grasses and trees, to transform old species and breed new ones. Moreover it does not exempt man from this planned evolution. He is to be developed so that he may become master of his own powers as well as master of the powers of nature.

In a sporadic way, of course, this war has been going on since man first made a tool; but it has been fought planlessly and ineffectively and from a large social view, unconsciously. Against his will man has turned over as much good land into desert as he has taken; he has helped as many rivers to run wild as he has tamed. Divided into nations, classes and other smaller but equally contradictory interests, he has exacted service from nature in one field only to find it doing greater disservice in another. In this warfare he can be successful only when united. Our recent droughts and dust storms are witness to the defeats our capitalist disunity has brought upon us; the extraordinary scientific advances in the Soviet Union are witnesses to the victories possible to planned, collective campaigning.

It is Ilin's achievement to make this clear. A genius at popularization, he has something else that only a Soviet writer can possess—the participator's sense of this new war. It is drawn not from his imagination but from its realization in the life around him. Why this extraordinary enthusiasm so puzzling to people outside of the Soviet Union over the building of a dam, over the voyage of an icebreaker, over the tunneling of a city, over the discovery of new ore deposits? It is in part the joy over new wealth in which every one has a share, by which every one feels richer; but it is also the celebration of victories by a people carrying on this great war. Never are Ilin's pages static; every phrase is active; the conflict that is the breath of life in narrative is there, but it is no longer a conflict between men and men for treasure or a woman; it is the conflict between man and nature for the possession of the earth. Ilin's great literary gifts are aided by a new consciousness that no writer in a capitalist country could transmit.

Tribute should also be paid to Lapshin's illustrations. They have a curious quality, a succinctness in which every eighth inch of line counts.

Isidor Schneider.

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Life Without Stint

FROM THE KINGDOM OF NECESSITY, by Isidor Schneider. Putnam. $2.50.

IN THE nineteen-twenties when I was a reader on the staff of a popular magazine, it was considered that a story about a writer was anathema to the reading public. Manuscripts either used the writer as a hero-driver of a Rolls Royce and high-powered seducer at week-end parties or as a derelict-drifter quoting quaint philosophy as he drank himself to death. In any case the writer never emerged as a human being and the impulse to reject such a puppet was sound. Dreiser in *The Genius* and *Dvoe's Pilgrimage* developed the personal conflicts of a writer's life but Isidor Schneider in *From the Kingdom of Necessity* has for the first time definitely articulated the life of a writer to the social background in which he finds himself.

That *From the Kingdom of Necessity* is obviously an autobiographical novel is relatively unimportant. Schneider has used the magnifying glass of Marxist understanding to look at a familiar world. It is a world that has been with him since the day he was born; part of his skin. The glass has clarified his comprehension of puzzling, painful and perhaps formerly confused events. It has given a sequence to details, illuminated old patterns and endowed his material with the freshness and buoyancy that we might expect of accounts of newly-discovered worlds. Quite definitely, Schneider's alignment with the class struggle has been a liberating, creative experience. The materials of this novel come without stint, falling abundantly from a horn of plenty.

Morris Hyman is a tailor whose exploitation in New York shops induces him to take a sewing machine to his native village in Russia in order to exploit his own neighbors and so lift himself up by his own boot straps. His pride dazzles him and he lets his chance slip. His neighbors buy machines of their own and the competitive process wipes him out in his own village. He again seeks America, this time with his family. The struggle of the Hymans in the East Side of New York would not be new except for Schneider's remarkably clear selective process. There is an almost burning concentration of detail; an intense heaping of the materials of poverty. But quite distinctly, this is not just a novel of poor people; it is a definite chronicle of the historic conditions of poverty. The Hymans, crowded out of tailoring, prefer to eat rather than to die of respectability. The father takes a janitor's job and the children toil over the furnace, sweeping and grubbing away at the job their father took. When Isaac Hyman finds that his talent for telling stories will fill the lonely basement with other boys glad to listen to his tales, he discovers the force that is to guide his life.

The father's desperate drive to rise out of his class gives value only to that which can be turned to money and he cannot understand his son's refusal to ask a penny from his friends in payment for the stories they enjoy. For the father, writing becomes a mere poverty-trade like tailoring. For the son, it becomes a way to make a life. This power compensates Isaac for his poverty and defeat, saves the boy from perishing among the many faceless and nameless whose little stories make the pages of this book such fascinating reading. The Hyman parents pinch pennies and continually lamenting, roll up a little bank account. It is their toe-hold on the next step up; they rise from janitor to tenant class but it is a hollow triumph. The little tailor shop started on the painfully acquired savings, fails to catch on; the candy store that follows threatens destruction. Only a desperate bluff in which some other sucker takes the fall allows the Hymans to breathe again.

I cannot give too high praise to these chapters of the Hymans' struggles and of Isaac's finding himself consoled by his writing gift for his poverty, his skinny body, his father's hatred. The sticks of furniture, the halls and stairs, the furnace the boy feeds have the curious alive quality that animal life has and above stairs, in the house itself on every floor a different family lives and has a special being. An imaginative power that is true greatness in writing expands this suffering poor world into the less painful world of comprehended experience. The actual setting of this novel may be east-side New York; it might be anywhere in the world where the little man is trying to live.

Isaac springs from this ground and poverty teaches him. His writing gift saves him from repeating the family pattern. His feeling of inferiority does not allow him to think of writing, from the beginning, in terms of money-power but in terms of human contact. Later this is to enrich his life; it is to keep him steady in a giddy world. He goes through school, grubs along in jobs, worms his way by virtue of his special ability. The further development of the book sifts the world of experience through the pores of Isaac's skin. Already deeply ingrained with the wrongs of the working class he keeps clear of the war, smells decay in society around him. Stories flood the book, the story of Mr. Miller, of Mr. Melzer the landlord, countless others. These barnacles on the main theme have their own right to life. They contribute richness to the book, open up the cramped confines of a straitjacket novel; widen the world that Schneider has undertaken to write about.

I take into account that this is definitely a revolutionary novel when I say that the editorializing passages do not seem always successful. There is a fine tradition for this method but even if there were not, one could make a new path. The test would be its success. When Schneider compares a new-born baby to empire building and the birth of Cuba, I feel the teacher's pointer. This comes from the same source from which the finest qualities of this book spring, the zeal and conviction of the author but it carries him into too pedagogical a field in some cases. The really vivid narrative is dragged down, not up. It would be a mistake to say it always failed. In the beginning of chapters in particular, it seems to inject the subject with a propelling power forward. Its danger as a method lies in mistaking commonplaces for illuminating source material. Its further danger lies in clipping into an editorialization a too pat conclusion. I give example, that of the chapter that takes Isaac as a budding author into society. He is given an ugly duckling for a partner, his youth is slighted, writing is not revered. Isaac might as a character out of chagrin draw the conclusion that writing in America is shoddy because bourgoise women make up the audience and they regard writers as lower-class servants, but Schneider the author cannot draw such a conclusion without opening himself to criticism. It is by no means so simple. As a matter of fact, American bourgeoisie overrate the persons of writers even when they never read them, and the worst trash of all is written for the poor. Editorializing that slips into formulas is easy but dulls rather than brightens a fine book and that this is a very fine book there is no question.

The skimping of the women characters toward the end, their rather shadowy emergence out of a book so solid and real is no doubt due to the fact that another book is to follow this one in which their development may take on the same substance as that of the Hymans and even of some of the people who tell their stories only to depart.

JOSEPHINE HERBST.

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The Theater

The Theater Union Produces "Mother"

ALL during the intermissions at *Mother* I was reminded of an unusual Paris opening I attended seven years ago. Instead of the bile-green walls and stuffy antiqueness of the Civic Repertory Theater stood the up-to-the-minute chic of the Salle Pleyel with its beige plush seats and mulberry-carpeted aisles. The occasion was a new Prokofief symphony. The first few numbers, familiar to the audience, drew the usual dispensation of applause, but as soon as the Prokofief work began, with its violently experimental orchestration and fearless technical innovations, there were outcries of "Awful!" "Insulting!" "How dare you!" from the well-bred auditors in the front rows. "Stop it!" one of them demanded, but the orchestra played on. Finally three rotund patrons in evening dress, appointing themselves bodyguards of French culture, raised their umbrellas in a desperate effort to stop the program. The Prokofief work was something radical, uncompromising—expressing an unwillingness to accept the limitations of the cultural status quo. And the bourgeois audience reacted as it so often reacts when something fearless and questioning invades its security. How different the response of the Civic Repertory audience to the innovations of the new Theater Union production, with its unexpected stage-effects, acting, singing, lantern-slides, etc. Its timid hand-clapping made plain that it could not immediately accept all this strangeness, but sudden bursts of applause testified to an overwhelming friendliness and sympathy. For the audience instinctively knew that any sincere attempt to tell a revolutionary story in a revolutionary way deserves a devoted hearing. Although accustomed to the realism of previous Theater Union plays, it recognized at once that such a progressive experiment as *Mother* has an unimpeachable place in the left-wing theater.

There is actually nothing abstruse about *Mother*; in fact it is one of the clearest plays imaginable. "Take some Agit-prop, add a bit of Piscator and Meyerhold and a Greek chorus—put them all together and they spell *Mother*," somebody wise-cracked half-seriously. And the authors, Bert Brecht and Hanns Eisler, would heartily agree that they have drawn on every source which offered suggestions and materials for their adaptation of Gorky's classic novel. But they would insist on explaining the basic principle which shaped every instant of their play. Brecht would point out that *Mother* differs from other drama because it is a "learning play" and as such belongs to his "epic theater."

A new type of play is essential, wrote Brecht, if the theater is to present great contemporary themes in a useful manner. But effectual work is impossible so long as the spectator is approached in the usual way, so long as the play "hypnotized" him and he becomes emotionally entangled. In the "epic" theater the spectator *watches* the action. No longer identifying himself with the players, he develops a critical attitude toward the social problems unravelled on the stage. Thus he is capable of making judgments and decisions which will determine his own future conduct. The "epic" theater, by showing the world as it changes and how it may be changed, therefore involves the audience in a process of learning. And the emotions may be directed toward understanding and judgments. The music contributes toward this end. Instead of intensifying the the emotions of a scene, Hanns Eisler's songs strive to "resolve" and clarify the feelings aroused in the spectator. Somewhat in the Greek chorus manner, the music becomes an instrument for restating, arranging and thinking through the meaning of the action. An "epic" play then becomes a dynamic experience in which the entire audience collaborates with the chorus and players in a single process of learning.

Now the Theater Union has not attempted to reproduce *Mother* strictly according to the Brecht-Eisler theory. Its own experience with past productions made some drastic changes advisable. What is now playing at the Civic Repertory, therefore, is an adaptation of the Brecht-Eisler play in accordance with the Theater Union's conception of the tastes and needs of American audiences. The music, for example, originally scored for thirty voices and orchestra, is sung by a much smaller group and to a double-piano accompaniment. Instead of addressing the audience as a chorus always separate from the players, the singers alternate between this and participation in the action—with the resulting mixture of styles. Also, a scene and a song have been omitted.

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Now it is obvious that to judge this adaptation one must have seen the original 1933 Berlin production. But whether or not the Theater Union was right in revising the original is at present merely an academic question. The important question is: Is this an interesting play? Is it a rewarding experience? Is it really worth seeing?

The answer is an unqualified yes. With startling simplicity the actors and chorus retell the story of Pelagea Vlasova, widow of a worker, who is suddenly drawn into the class struggle through her son, a militant worker in the Sukhlinov factory at Tversk in 1907. A bitter hater of violence, she soon finds herself compelled, by the logic of circumstances and the violence of the exploiters, into action on behalf of her class. We see her distributing strike leaflets, marching in the May 1 demonstration; we watch her learning the truths at the foundation of the class struggle; we see her transformed by the logic of critical events into a revolutionary of heroic stature. The outline of the story is now well known, for Gorky's novel has long been a classic; and yet Brecht has remade it in a manner of his own. Pelagea Vlasova lives through the world war period, suffers the death of her son, agitates against war, sees at last the magnificent day of triumph for the proletariat of her country.

This outline, of course, tells nothing of the quality of *Mother* which is above all a "learning" play. Nothing is disdained—direct address to the audience, lantern slides showing a worker's expense account, songs underscoring the meaning—if it can make memorable the message implicit in the story. When Pelagea at first denounces strikes and opposes militancy, a group of workers give her a three-minute course in the rudiments of revolutionary theory which is a little masterpiece of clarity and concreteness. Similarly, the songs make a direct statement to the audience saying in frankly explicit terms that "knowledge is class-struggle," that we must make ourselves "ready to take power," or reflecting on socialism, the thing that's "so simple and so hard to do."

Mother provokes so many questions that it would take pages and not paragraphs for answering. One immediately thinks of Brecht's whole theory of channelizing the emotions away from the players—how does this apply to the scene in which Pelagea's son, escaped from prison, returns for a painfully brief visit with his mother before he flees to the border? According to the "epic" principle, this calls for no display of emotion for that would "entangle" the audience; and as this scene is performed the mother and son hew to the "epic" line. But that hardly leaves the audience emotionally unentangled—in fact, the very restraint of the mother and son becomes an understatement a thousand times more emotionally stirring than realistic surrender to impulses (à la Bertha Kalisch and the school of hysterics) could ever be.

Then there is the very form of the scenes, which has been made familiar to our audiences through some Theater of Action productions. Is the method (generally similar to that of *Newsboy*, for example) capable of supporting a full-length drama? or is it most effective when used to concentrate a host of apparently disparate elements into a single focus of tremendous power? And what of the scene in which Pelagea, fevered with grief at her son's death, rises from her sickbed to carry on for the Party? As produced at the Civic Repertory, with the chorus shouting at her, "Get up, get up, for the Party is in danger," the impression is utterly distorted. The very suggestion is a brutalization of Bolshevik thinking.

There is the question of "didactic" drama, which has long been a bogey of criticism. Brecht is not afraid of forthright didacticism because didactic art when suffused with revolutionary meaning is simply political art; and as such it touches the very root of Marxian purpose. If *Mother*, like many well-intentioned products, were didactic in an inorganic sense, it could be dismissed as a failure. But Brecht has fused the form and the content of his play in such a way that its didacticism is part of the very texture. If *Mother* had accomplished nothing more than this demonstration of successful didacticism, its present production would be justified.

People inevitably compare *Stevedore*, *Let Freedom Ring* and the *Sailors of Cattaro* with *Mother* in the hope of deciding which type is the more desirable. But there is really no comparison to be made. The realistic play can be powerful revolutionary drama, the agit-prop play (*Waiting for Lefty*, *Mother*) can be powerful revolutionary drama. One form does not exclude the other, and there is no question of "choice." Our theater needs both kinds of plays and will need a great many new kinds as yet uncreated. The immediate fact is simply this: today there are two plays in New York striving in different accents to make their single story heard above the noises of chaos —*Let Freedom Ring* and *Mother*—plays which demand the attention and deserve the devotion of every sane person who cares anything at all about his own future and the future of the world.

STANLEY BURNSHAW.

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Boulevardier

ROBERT FORSYTHE

AMONG the more heartening sights to be seen upon the streets of New York is a young man named Lucius Beebe, who acts as sort of sandwich-man for the upper classes. At a time when there may seem to be some excuse for laxity in public duty, Mr. Beebe is to be seen coursing through the lanes of Manhattan with seemingly no other concern than the return of elegance to a civilization notoriously devoid of it. His customary garb, as night falls, is the white tie, the topper, the opera cape. In his wake may be seen other young men of courage but some trepidation, their eyes straight before them, their hearts set desperately on some point of safety and not too confident of their arrival.

For those who have not had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Beebe, it may be well to say that in addition to his regular and daring appearances in places of public importance, he indites a weekly column for The New York Herald Tribune, which is read with admiration by citizens as far West as Davenport, Iowa, and is said to have resulted in the death of a youth in Champaign, Ill., who was correct in assuming that he was the Mid-American counterpart of Mr. Beebe but erred in his estimate of the state of civilization in Champaign. Writing in a style which can only be compared with the work of Mrs. Harry Lehr, Mr. Beebe has brought a rush of hope to the breasts of countless young men who have never been happy over the way the colonies treated George III.

Mr. Beebe after nightfall is one thing but Mr. Beebe at high noon, strolling through Times Square in his velvet jacket and Ascot tie, is another. Mr. Beebe at the race track in his bowler hat, his pearl stickpin and his high yellow buttoned shoes is still another. Not since the days of Barry Wall has the town seen such elegance, known such confidence that the days of the Regency are nearer than any of us imagine. These are indications of the true bent of Mr. Beebe's mind but it is only when one knows the warmth of his defense of the silk topper that one gets a full picture of the man. Mr. Beebe's life is really given over to a conflict which has for its goal the triumph of the silk topper over the opera hat. To the uninitiated it may be said that the opera hat is one which collapses at the slightest provocation; the silk topper being one which collapses only when sat upon.

The pleasure with which Mr. Beebe reports the stray hisses which greet his evening appearances has given rise to suspicion of his motives. There are critics who maintain that (a) Mr. Beebe is a true workman for the rich; (b) that he is in the pay of the Comintern; this, naturally, on the theory that one look at Mr. Beebe garbed for the theater would immeasurably advance the revolution, and (c) that he is an Agent Provocateur, leading the masses to premature revolt with their resultant massacre by the armed forces.

Mixed in this is a great deal of fantasy. The theory that the masses might be led to revolt by the sight of Mr. Beebe is ridiculous for the simple reason that upon sight of Mr. Beebe the masses are stunned. The further fact of the hisses is also suspect on the ground that Mr. Beebe, a shrewd sandwich-man and a resourceful advertiser, carries his hissing stooge with him in the same manner that a prima donna maintains her claque. The simple truth of the matter is that Mr. Beebe is doing an excellent job in the most loyal way. If because of various unpleasantnesses the rich blades of the town are reluctant to show their faces in public places, it is the duty of Mr. Beebe to restore their morale and return the common folk to their accustomed position of dependancy and respect.

Since it is plain that no man born within reasonable distance of Park Avenue could be so concerned about the prerogatives of the upper ledge, it is only fair to assume that Mr. Beebe was reared in a place which could be readily identified as Ashtabula, O. Starting there in curls and an Eton jacket, it was only a question of time until he should rise to the friendship of one who shall remain nameless as Sigourney Thayer. There is some doubt about the existence of Sigourney Thayer, he being held by many to be an invention of Mr. Lucius Beebe, just as there will be controversy over the centuries about Mr. Beebe himself. Neither gentleman seems entirely possible but unless The Herald Tribune is engaged in spirit writing, there is a Beebe and unless Beebe is resorting to subterfuges which no gentleman would countenance there is a Sigourney Thayer. We can best indicate the extent of Mr. Beebe's gentlemanliness by quoting from his column in The Herald Tribune of many months gone:

> This department [writes Mr. Beebe] is willing to wager that the youth who appeared at one of Marion Cooley's evenings at the Stork Club last week won't do so again with his white evening waistcoat showing a good three inches under the lapels of his tailcoat. Sigourney and Molly Thayer, Lady Suzanne Wilkins and George Lowther, with several dinner guests, were sitting along the wall table and every time the sartorial outrage passed on the way to the dance floor they all averted their eyes and clapped loudly, an interruption which called the attention of the entire room to the poor wretch. After about four such salutations, it dawned on the youth that he was the object of the jape. He burst into tears, snatched up his girl and went away from there into the night. . . .

Incidents such as this indicate the magnitude of the task Mr. Beebe has assumed. One might imagine that the top-hat battle would keep him involved almost permanently. To think of taking over the length of waistcoats is enough to stagger anyone with a heart less devoted to an honest cause. If it will help him any to have the hisses of the proletariat, we shall endeavor to recruit a group which will attend Mr. Beebe during his evening garbing ceremony, during his triumphal progress to the theater, during his return to the offices of The Herald Tribune and thence to the Stork Club while he conducts his measurements of the entering customers.

Without further orders from the Comintern, we can do no more; unless, on our private initiative, we should arrange to have one of the entering customers at the Stork Club of such common derivation that he will object to being measured. In that event, we can only hope that Mr. Beebe will alight in pleasant company. Preferably about the neck of Mr. Sigourney Thayer. And, of course, in perfect sartorial order.

Art

Kerr Eby

AN exhibition of etchings and drawings by Kerr Eby, under the title of "The Tragedy of War," is on view until November 30 at the gallery of Frederick Keppel and Co., 16 East 57th Street, New York.

Eby depicts, in powerfully dramatic drawings and plates which are masterpieces in the technique of etching, the grim brutality of herding thousands of men to a sheep-like slaughter, the corpse-strewn battlefields, huddled refugees, women and children deprived of shelter and similar typical aspects of the last World War, drawn from the first-hand experiences of the artist. Quite obviously he knows what war is. In a small illustrated brochure Eby presents his views and reactions to war in a sincere and deeply-felt manner. He is an honest and militant Christian and takes his Christianity literally. He *means* "peace on earth, good will to men," instead of using it as a Christmas song.

> . . . but I most certainly am a pacifist, if being one is to believe that there can be and are other ways of settling differences between Christian nations than murdering youngsters — and that lawful, not to say sanctified, wholesale slaughter is simply slobbering imbecility.
>
> There was great beauty in the last war as there is always beauty in human giving, but the beauty was in the giver not in the thing itself. It must be remembered that all of us underneath had some vague idea of purging the world of an evil. . . . It seemed almost right that those still, shapeless bundles should be there—that something new and good should come of it. Now we know that nothing came of it—much to the contrary—they died for less than nothing. We who are left have seen to that.
>
> The very great majority of us stand to lose all that we hold most dear. Yet all that we seem capable of is to sit on our behinds, doing nothing

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—and watch with sheep-like eyes the slaughter creeping nearer.

Despite the feeling of despair and futility, the artist is moved by the imminence of another and more terrible world carnage, to cry out and rally public sentiment against such a step. He admits that he does not know what to do about it but offers an old and oft-suggested plan. In essence it is that the women of the world, by banding together, can prevent war.

Eby may consider it presumptuous of anyone—especially a person like myself who has not been through the first-hand experience of war—to attempt to tell him what war is or is not, or what the most effective steps are to prevent its recurrence. I shall not attempt here to present the Marxian explanation of the nature of war and its causal factors. He can get that easily enough, if he wishes, in a single evening's reading. But I do want to say this: sooner or later he will find—if he sticks to his guns—that to take such a militant stand against war as he has done in print and drawings will throw him inevitably on to the side of the revolutionary working class. The makers of war will see to that. He will find to his surprise that he is a "Red."

I am not proposing here any conversion-talk. Anyone that has the guts to come out against war as cleanly and courageously as Eby has done is by the fact our natural ally. But I want to call to Eby's attention another force against war, at present in process of formation and in his own field. I refer to the American Artists' Congress. To date, over 200 of the country's most prominent artists of various races, creeds, social origins and political beliefs have come together in full and enthusiastic agreement on the one basic plank of the Congress . . . namely, *the fight against war and fascism.* It would be excellent if Eby were to add his voice to those of his fellow artists who have recognized the "terrific power of mass formations" (to use Eby's own phrase) in the common struggle for life against the makers of death.

STEPHEN ALEXANDER.

Between Ourselves

NEARLY eighteen months ago a labor organizer was kidnaped in Florida, taken away from his wife and child at night and has never been seen since. All efforts to force official action have failed. The murder of Frank Norman has remained a "mystery," an open mystery in which the motive and the killer both were known. Several weeks ago THE NEW MASSES sent Bruce Minton to Florida to investigate. He presents the results in an article in next week's issue.

The necessity for presenting the record of General Sherrill as quickly as possible—the A.A.U. executive meets in a few days to decide on American participation in the Olympics—made unexpected demands on our space this week. "Battle of the Century," by Emanuel Eisenberg, announced for this issue, will appear next week.

Mort and E. A. Gilbert, who write on industrial insurance in this week's issue, are active in the Writers' Union of Philadelphia.

Isidor Schneider, one of the editors of THE NEW MASSES, will lecture on "Poets: To Be or Not To Be," at the Hotel Delano, Dec. 2. His lecture will be one of a series under the auspices of the League of American Writers. Other speakers in the series will be Granville Hicks, Earl Browder, R. Bruce Raup, Loren Miller, James Wechsler and others.

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The stockings that hang by the chimney-place there
Have been more or less filled, but all with due care.
And there in the corner, the sly old elf,
Lingers St. Nicholas, all by himself.
For his bundle of toys has slipped from his back—
He's devouring a paper picked from his pack.
His eyes are a-twinkle, his cheeks are aglow,
What on earth can it be that's intriguing him so?
"By the beard on my chin, that's the truth," he mutters,
And sounds like "Swell!" "First-rate!" "Bravo" he utters;
Then a loud guffaw, and a Marxian snort—
"Well said, Forsythe, your humor's my sort.
"I must read that book, I must see that play—
"Here's a whole new slant on the world today."
His nose pushes deeper into the pages—
"So that's how the bosses are cutting wages.
"By my favorite reindeer, Donner and Blitzen,
"I can see this world needs a whole lot of fixing.
"Whoever gets this is going to see Red,
"It's the best gift in my pack," he said.
"I'd like to put it in every stocking.
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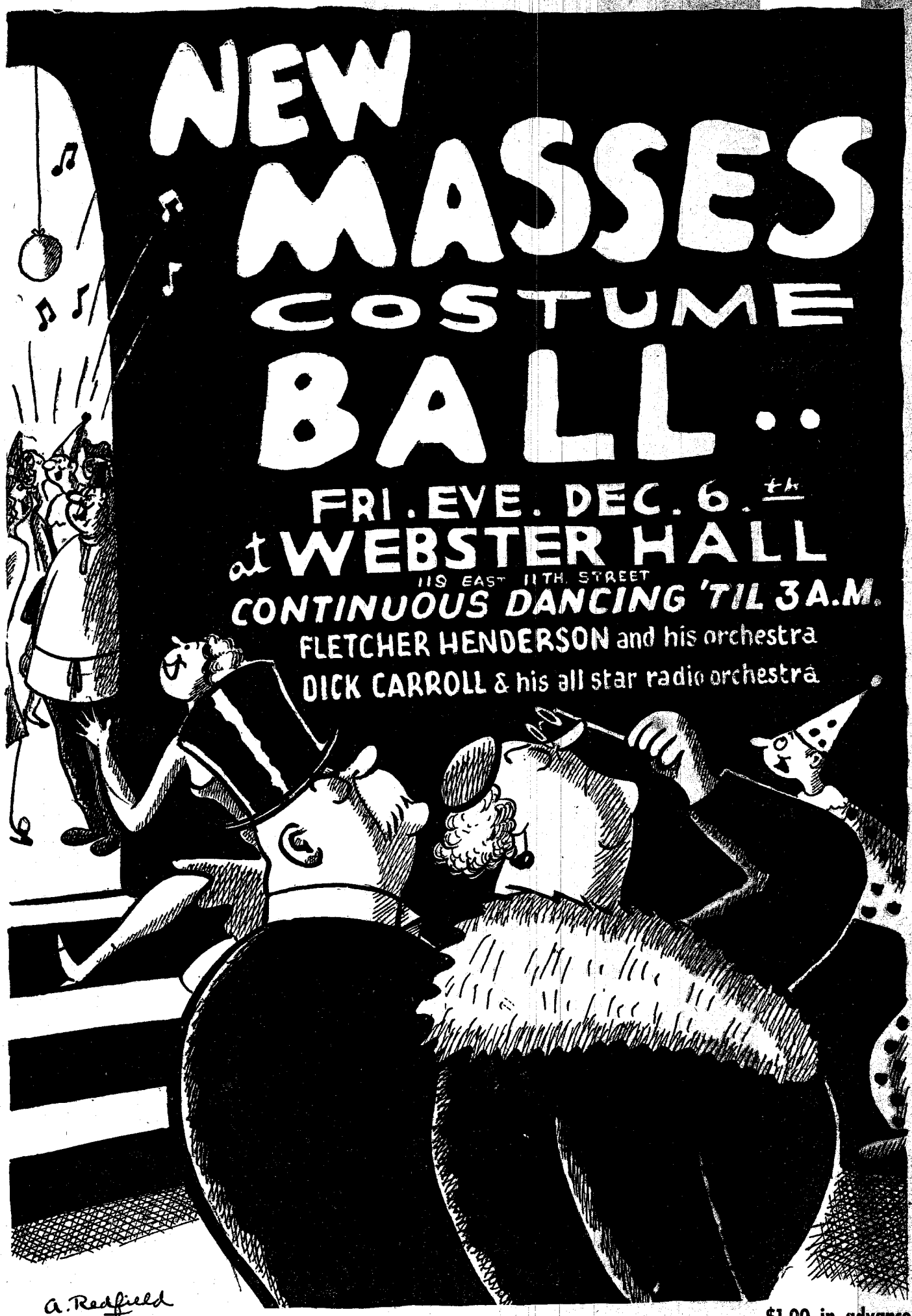

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